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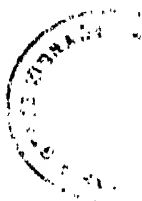
THE HAMPDEN HOUSE PORTRAIT OF JOHN HAMPDEN.

# JOHN HAMPDEN'S ENGLAND

By  
John Drinkwater

*In troubled Water you can scarce  
see your Face, or see it very little,  
till the Water be quiet and stand still.  
So in troubled times you can see little  
Truth ; when times are quiet and  
settled, then Truth appears.*

JOHN SELDEN



LONDON :  
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TO  
T. G. MASARYK,  
PRESIDENT OF THE CZECHOSLOVAK REPUBLIC  
THIS STORY OF A GREAT ENGLISHMAN  
IS DEDICATED

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## NOTE

It is strange that for over a hundred years no attempt has been made to give a full-length portrait of Hampden in relation to his times. As the present book is intended to show, Hampden from his first entrance into Parliament as a young man of twenty-six until his death in the second year of the Civil War at the age of forty-nine, was in many important respects the most representative figure in the party that gave a new direction to the whole character of English life. And yet writers on the period with hardly an exception have been content to regard him only as the hero of a spectacular moment.

The writing of history is always a chastening experience. It seldom fails to remind us how fugitive may be fame and merit. In writing this study, I have been constantly indebted to *Some Memorials of John Hampden, His Party and His Times*, by George Grenville, Lord Nugent, published in 1831. Although it reached a second edition within a year of publication, and was noticed by Macaulay in one of his best *Edinburgh* reviews, it is a work I suppose now unknown to any but a few scholars. Yet it is of a distinction which, if it has not much been latterly noted, is certainly notable. It is itself marked by a scholarship that would be rare to-day and was later still in Nugent's time ; it is sagacious in its judgments, it is generous in its feeling ; and it is full of admirable writing.

It is true that Nugent frequently allows himself long discursions on topics that are now of little but academic interest, whatever they may have been when he wrote. His enquiry into the ecclesiastical state of Europe in connection with the disputes on episcopacy in England, for example, is at best enlightening on a matter about which not many readers to-day are seeking light. These are small blemishes, however, in a book that is otherwise excellently proportioned, and very readable. Certainly as readable, shall we say, as many works that in the modern school of biography have been justly admired. One might suppose that it would have been as likely to survive in general esteem ; which, as I say, is a chastening reflection.

I have also drawn freely from the sources to which Nugent went. Personal records of Hampden in the way of family documents are scanty, and Nugent's record of these constitutes a source in itself. In the present work this has been extensively supplemented by material taken from the public chronicles contemporary with Hampden. Chief among these are John Rushworth's *Historical Collections*, Bulstrode Whitelock's *Memorials*, Edmund Ludlow's *Memoirs*, William Dugdale's *Short View of the Late Troubles in England* and Philip Warwick's *Memoirs of the Reign of Charles I.* [etc.] The correspondence between Hampden and Eliot is to be found in a small private edition of *The Letter Book of Sir John Eliot*, published in 1882 for Lord St. Germans by Alexander B. Grosart. Particulars of Hampden's school-days are given in Mr. J. Howard Brown's *Short History of Thame School* (1927). Other sources are mentioned in the text.

In acknowledging my debt to Nugent, it may be unnecessary to add that my interpretation of the evidence frequently does not coincide with his. Perhaps it would be more accurate to say that I have attempted the interpretation on a somewhat broader basis.

I have said elsewhere that no obligation of this nature can be fully discharged without a respectful salute to the *Dictionary of National Biography*. While writing, I have at intervals consulted such historians as Gardiner, Prothero, and C. H. Firth, for the purpose sometimes of refreshing my mind by a bird's-eye view of the scene, and sometimes of testing my own conclusions.

The illustrations, with one exception, need no comment, and due acknowledgments have been made on the plates. The frontispiece calls for a word of explanation. There is no known portrait of Hampden which can claim undisputed authenticity. There are several of some contemporary standing. Mr. C. K. Adams, of the National Portrait Gallery, has kindly furnished me with an annotated list of no less than nine of these, which were the source of a multiplicity of posthumous engravings. None, however, has a clear title, though a common resemblance among many gives them some authority. In the circumstances I have felt free to choose the one that most took my own fancy, a charming portrait, by an unknown artist, in the possession of the Earl of Buckinghamshire at Hampden House. It has the support of family tradition, and is the likeness most esteemed by Hampden's descendants.

To the Earl of Buckinghamshire, of Hampden

#### NOTE

House, The Hon. Montague Eliot, of Port Eliot, and Major Ducat-Hammersley, of Pyrton Manor, I am indebted for many courtesies. Mr. F. J. Varley has been generous in placing his scholarship and his civil-war material at my disposal. Mr. A. I. Ellis and Mr. H. R. Aldridge of the British Museum, and Mr. C. K. Adams, of The National Portrait Gallery, have given me valuable assistance, as also have Mr. Arthur Lett and Mr. H. J. Caterer, of Watlington. Mr. Alistair N. Tayler has again been so kind as to read my proofs.

J. D.

# John Hampden's England

## CHAPTER I

### THE FIRST STUARTS AND PARLIAMENT

#### I

JOHN HAMPDEN was born in 1594. The exact date and place of his birth are unrecorded. He came, however, of a well-established family in Buckinghamshire, with which county his own history was to be closely associated. His grandfather, Griffith Hampden, High Sheriff of the shire, had enjoyed the costly privilege of entertaining Queen Elizabeth at Hampden House. Griffith sat in Parliament, as also did his son William, who married Elizabeth Cromwell, second daughter of Sir Henry Cromwell, of Hinchbrook. Of this marriage John Hampden was the eldest son. Elizabeth Hampden's brother, Robert Cromwell, married Elizabeth Steward, and in 1599, five years after John Hampden's birth, their son Oliver was born. The two great Puritans were, therefore, first cousins.

As a boy John Hampden attended the Grammar School at Thame. In June, 1643, at the age of forty-nine, he rode, mortally wounded, from Chalgrove Field to the same little town, where, after several days of suffering borne with a fortitude that was part of the

man, he died. The engagement in which he lost his life was no more than a skirmish. The first, and hitherto the only major action of the Civil War, had been fought eight months earlier at Edgehill. He and his cousin Oliver left the scene of that indecisive battle with a heavy sense of the long discipline that their cause would have to endure before the principles of freedom for which it was pledged could be established in England. At that moment, both in character and ability, these men more than any others in the Puritan party were marked for active leadership in the coming struggle. Hampden, indeed, the popular hero of the Ship-money case, already had a national reputation, but none knew so well as he the latent powers that were burning towards incandescence in his sturdy cousin from Huntingdon. 'That sloven whom you see before you,' he said to an enquirer before the quarrel was past repair, 'hath no ornament in his speech, but if we should have to come to a breach with the King—which God forbid!—that sloven will be the greatest man in England.' Cromwell by a civil and military genius which none of his time could match, was destined for supreme office, but had Hampden lived to see the quarrel through we may believe that no voice would have been more valuable or more valued in the councils of the Commonwealth than his. Hampden's name would have added splendour to a government which included those of Cromwell, Milton and Marvell. And now, by what was hardly more than an accident of outposts, with the real trial yet to be made, the parliamentary cause lost one of its most intrepid and disinterested friends.

## II

The Puritan revolution, like all great events in history, was infinitely complex in its origins. 'At this crisis,' says G. W. Prothero, 'political and ecclesiastical considerations were inextricably fused.' This is true, but it is a truth into which too much must not be read. Religion, genuine religious emotion, was an important element not only in the Puritan life but in the national life from the death of Elizabeth until the Restoration. To a man like Cromwell it was clearly a matter of daily and profound urgency. There were many men of saintly character, prepared to suffer any oppression for their faith, but moderate and gentle spirits desiring no violence in the name of God. Also, as is inevitable in the fury of any great antagonism, there were on both sides fanatics unbalanced in their views and ruthless in their action, men whose religion was founded not on love but on hatred. They were demoralising forces, usually a dishonour to their own cause. But this religious activity in all its degrees, essential as it was to the life of its age, was less influential as a source of the Puritan revolution than is frequently supposed. When we read that the political and ecclesiastical issues were closely fused, we should be careful in our interpretation of the term ecclesiastical. And the more we consider it, the more do we find that the ecclesiastical quarrel was not so much fused with the political as identical with it. That is to say, it was really the political aspect of the ecclesiastical question that stirred at the depths of the Puritan rising.

There was nothing in the temper of the responsible



Puritan leaders that would have disposed them to the persecution of any man's religion in itself. Their quarrel was not even with the doctrines of the church, it was with the political power of the bishops. There was, it is true, in the hearts of the English people a determined mistrust of Rome and its inquisitorial practices, a mistrust that had been guilty of its own oppressive cruelties ; and with a queen whose influence was openly in favour of the Pope, ecclesiastical ceremony was necessarily viewed with alert suspicion. Had the state church clearly dissociated itself in spirit as well as in letter from Romish doctrine, and been content to confine itself to its proper offices of religion without attempting to control the civil administration, there would have been no revolt against the prelacy. But the bishops, in fact, were the chief agents of the Court party in the House of Lords, and thus among the most powerful instruments of the King's policy. It was in this character that they fell beneath the Puritan judgment. Laud was executed not because he was an English churchman nor because his ritual offended a few fanatics, but because he was in effect an oppressive minister of the Crown.

It is thus that the ecclesiastical issue becomes rather identical than fused with the political issue of the time. And the political issue, inevitably complicated though it was by considerations of personality and local circumstance, was really quite simple in its significance ; or perhaps we should say that its significance is quite simple to us to-day.

## III

Elizabeth Tudor, like her father Henry, could be ruthless in her autocratic treatment of individuals, but she never in any fundamental way outraged the sanctity of popular rights, nor forgot that the security of her throne depended upon their maintenance. However hardly and capriciously her personal displeasure might afflict any Englishman, there was no danger that she would ever attempt to infringe the privilege of the English people. When Tudor gave way to Stuart and James of Scotland came to the English throne, a new principle of monarchic government was set up in the country. The King was intent upon his own interests alone, and he was too stupid to see that his interests were in any way associated with those of his people. An entirely self-indulgent character, James I cared nothing about the condition of his kingdom as long as he could have his own way, and gratify the tastes of a very unattractive voluptuary. The doctrine of the divine right of kings was little more to him than a convenient charter for his personal appetites. He did not particularly wish his people any ill ; he merely wished not to have to think about them at all. Something of the Elizabethan tradition survived into his reign, in spite of himself, or rather because of his own indifference. So long as the King and his favourite Buckingham could enjoy themselves with occasional interludes when the royal obstinacy could make some public gesture, there was hardly a pretence of any government at all under James. Of constructive government, whether for good or bad, there was certainly

none. But when James was succeeded by his son Charles the repudiation of Elizabethan sanity took on another and a far more serious aspect. Charles the First was the worst king in English history, but this is by no means to say that he was an unprincipled fool like his father. The trouble about Charles was that he had very strong principles, that he clung to them tenaciously, and that they were almost invariably bad.

While the doctrine of divine right was a convenience to James, it was a gospel to his son. Charles was in many respects a weak character. Like his father he allowed himself to be dominated by favoured influences. First Buckingham and then the Queen exploited his confidence in them, steadily widening the breach between Crown and people. Also Charles, although no one could accuse him of a deficiency in personal courage, lacked the larger fortitude that is sometimes demanded by loyalty to friends. When Strafford's death-warrant lay before him on the table, he was placed in an agonising dilemma, but when he put his pen to the page he escaped from it by the way of dishonour. Strafford, in his high-minded bigotry, had challenged the people, and in the temper of the time he can hardly have been surprised by the vengeance demanded when the challenge failed. But at least he had a right to believe that he would not be deserted by the sovereign to whom he had devoted great and able if misdirected service. In addition to these defects of character, Charles also suffered from an incurable political ineptitude. His public mind was consistently incapable of enlightenment. For twenty years before

his tragic end, ever since the Petition of Right had made for ever memorable the Parliament of 1628, events had thundered their lessons in his ears, and from none of them had he been able to learn anything.

And still the distinction between his stupidity and that of his father remains. Charles was mistaken in his public policy, whereas James can hardly be said to have had any public policy at all. When Charles spoke of himself as the custodian of his people's welfare, there was no touch of cynicism in the claim. He really did believe that complete and unquestioning acceptance of the King's divinely appointed right was the ideal condition of material happiness for the subject. There was in the conception a kind of infatuated mysticism which was hardly affected at all by thought. Bliss for the subject lay in the art of obedience, no matter what the orders might be. Happy indeed were the subjects of a despot so benevolently disposed as Charles Stuart. That was the royal view of the matter. But even should benevolence fail, the necessities of subjection were no less inexorable. The only alternative that Charles could conceive to this principle of government was ruinous anarchy. There was no place in his mind for the idea of consulting the people in the determination of their own interests. He was continually attempting to impose his will upon a reluctant kingdom, and the consequences were the Puritan revolution and his own destruction.

Parliament was the scene of the early stages of this trouble between the King and the people. The Court party was always strong enough at Westminster to offer a determined opposition to the new champions

of popular rights, but the King's most effective instrument against the rising tide of democratic opinion was his power, which whether it was constitutional or not no one was in a position to make inoperative, of summarily dismissing Parliament. At least he fondly supposed that it was effective. In fact, as a man of vision or even of a little common-sense must have seen, it only delayed the inevitable day of reckoning. Between Charles's accession in 1625 and the assembling of the Long Parliament in 1640, the same futility was enacted no less than five times. Forced by the necessities of an empty purse, Charles would issue writs to the constituencies and the members would meet at Westminster. After due expressions of loyalty, the House would insist respectfully that no funds could be voted until some assurance of government reform had been given by the Crown. Charles would reply hotly that they were there to supply the national exchequer and for the rest to mind their own business, which was not to interfere with State affairs. To our modern minds, the inheritors of a freedom of which the seeds were then being sown, the attitude seems so preposterous as hardly to be credible. And yet the King was no less infatuated than that. Each time, when the Commons refused to acknowledge these arbitrary pretensions, Charles lost his temper and dissolved Parliament. 'Remember,' he exclaimed on one occasion, 'that Parliaments are altogether in my power for their calling, sitting, and dissolution; therefore, as I find the fruits of them good or evil, they are to continue or not to be.'

'Then, with the doors of Westminster closed, would

follow another period of shiftless improvisation by the King and his minister. Desperate efforts were made to replenish the Treasury by the levying of imposts and taxes which, not having the sanction of Parliament, were in effect illegal. Clearly, any stable government by such methods was impossible. Sooner or later one of two things was bound to happen. Either the King, in order to replenish his revenue, would have to meet Parliament on its own terms, or he would be broken. In the meantime, further, it was certain that the smouldering mood of discontent provoked by his irregular methods of taxation would here and there break out into open challenge. The most memorable instance was when John Hampden refused to pay his Ship-money.

## IV

In the old buildings of the Thame Grammar School, no longer used for scholastic purposes, they still show the attic and the bed that are traditionally said to have been John Hampden's when he was a boarder. The school, endowed by Lord Williams of Thame, and opened in 1570, has many notable names on its roll. Among its earliest scholars was George Croke, who, as a judge of the King's Bench, was to play a conspicuous part in Hampden's Ship-money trial. William Basse, a good poet honoured by Izaak Walton, attended as a local boy, and another poet of far greater merit was one of the seniors when Hampden was a junior. Henry King was born at Worminghall in 1592. His birthplace

## THE FIRST STUARTS AND PARLIAMENT

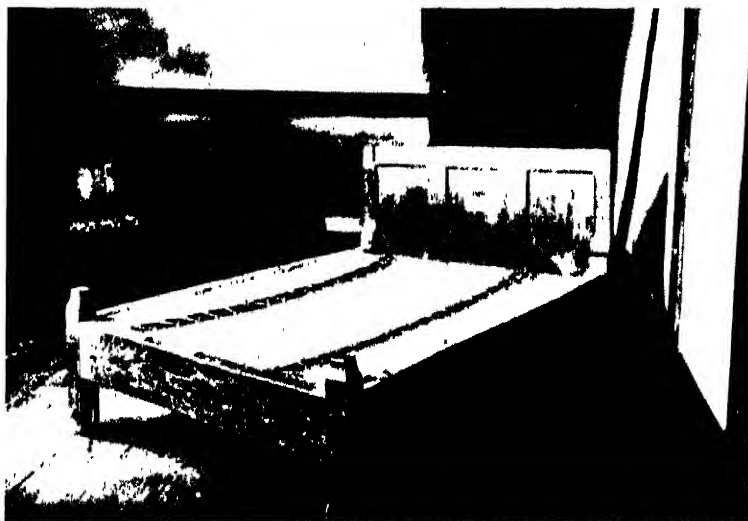
is somewhat invidiously celebrated with three other villages of the Thame district in the rhyme :

‘ *Brill on the hill,  
Oakley in the hole,  
Shabby little Ickford,  
And dirty Worminghall.*’

Dirty or not, however, Worminghall did well by English lyric poetry. Henry King became Bishop of Chichester, but he did much more than that. Mr. J. Howard Brown, in his excellent history of Thame School, cites him as a minor poet whose ‘Tell me no more how fair she is’ has been praised by that great critic George Saintsbury. But Saintsbury, in his short *History of English Literature*, did not note, nor does Mr. Brown, that King wrote the *Exequy on His Wife*, which is one of the glories not of minor but of major seventeenth-century lyric verse. Hampden was a lucky boy to have such a school-fellow. Among scholars of a later date were George Etherege, the Restoration dramatist and diplomat ; Shackerley Marmion, less disreputable as a playwright than as a citizen ; Anthony Wood, the Oxford antiquary ; the Dr. Fell whom somebody did not like ; and Thomas Ellwood, Milton’s Quaker friend. These men were Thame scholars indisputably. On less secure evidence the school also claims William Lenthall, perhaps the most famous of all Speakers in the House of Commons, born at Henley-on-Thames ; Arthur Goodwin, Hampden’s close associate in the Buckinghamshire militia ; Edmund Waller, poet, political adventurer and Hampden’s kinsman ; and John Wilkes, the squint-eyed but not



OLD THAME GRAMMAR SCHOOL.



JOHN HAMPDEN'S ATTIC AND BED IN THE OLD THAME GRAMMAR SCHOOL.



unsuccessful amorist who was so disturbing to the age of George III.

Hampden left Thame Grammar School in 1609, when he was fifteen, and entered Magdalen College, Oxford, where he was among those chosen to write the University laudations—in Latin—in honour of the marriage of Princess Elizabeth to the Elector Palatine, Frederick V. This lady, daughter of James I and the heroine of Henry Wotton's 'Ye meaner Beauties of the Night,' was to become the Queen of Bohemia and the mother of Prince Rupert, in action with whom Hampden was to lose his life at Chalgrove Field. One of Hampden's poetical collaborators on this occasion was William Laud, then President of St. John's. It is unlikely that the rising ecclesiastic, then forty years of age, was more than aware of the existence of the young scholar at Magdalen who was to lay so heavy a hand on his destiny.

In 1613, Hampden was admitted to the Inner Temple in pursuit rather of a gentleman's education than of a career, since he had already inherited his father's Buckinghamshire estates, and was beginning to turn his attention to public affairs. Hampden House, magnificently situated on the slope of the Chilterns, has undergone many changes since the patriot's time, but one may still stand in the stone-floored room where he was arrested, and see there the gilded helmet that was borne on his coffin during the last journey from Thame; and from the windows looking towards London the view is still dominated by the splendid sweep of the clearing through the woods that was made by Griffith Hampden to please

Queen Elizabeth. A family tradition has it that Her Majesty arrived at Hampden in the evening, was gracious about her entertainment, but adding that the timber which then grew close up to the house must be obstructing a remarkable prospect, woke next morning to find the clearing made. In 1619 Hampden married Elizabeth, daughter of Edmund Symeon, Lord of the Manor of Pyrton, in Oxfordshire. The ceremony took place in the church of that parish on June 24th, and it was on June 24th that he died. Eighteen months later he took his seat for the first time as a member of the House of Commons, being returned by the electors of Grampound, in Cornwall, to James I's third Parliament. This Parliament, which sat for a year, although it accomplished nothing very decisive in action, was memorable in displaying a newly decisive tone. It was over five years since James had been reduced to the expedient of calling the people to Westminster, and now he did so in circumstances of national confusion, which interested him chiefly as a plausible pretext for raising money. He regarded with mixed feelings the quarrel between Spain and the Elector Palatine which was proceeding on the Continent. On the one hand the Elector, both as his own son-in-law and as Protestant champion, had private and public claims upon his support. On the other, he still cherished the project of a match between his son Charles and the Infanta of Spain, hoping thereby to relieve his chronic poverty with a share of the Spanish wealth that was a European fable. It has been claimed for James that in the conduct of his foreign policy he genuinely desired peace. In so far as he



*Hampton House, near the Tower.*

*As it appeared in 1649. John Hampden.*

HAMPDEN HOUSE.

*From an old print.*



PLYTON MANOR AND CHURCH, OXFORDSHIRE,  
from and in which John Hampden was married.

*From a drawing made before restoration took place. In the possession of  
Major Ducat Hamersley.*

was a man who earnestly desired a quiet life for himself, this is no doubt true. International brawls that disturbed his private pleasure were vexation, and his word would readily be given to compose rather than inflame differences, whatever principles might be involved. But that James's mind was capable of moving beyond this political quietism to any statesmanlike vision of an equitably settled Europe there is no evidence. He would have preferred Spain and Bohemia to stop their wrangling, but since they would not he had no clear conviction as to what he ought to do about it.

In 1620 the Elector was defeated at the Battle of Prague and public opinion in England took alarm. James, vaguely sensible of the fact, was also vaguely hopeful that it might be capitalised. He summoned Parliament and informed them that his negotiations for peace must be supported by material power. On this main issue Parliament was disposed to be accommodating. The Spanish threat, which was regarded as a Popish threat, had to be opposed with resolution and money. If the matter had ended there James would have been enchanted. He would have applied the money to his own convenience and let the resolution go. But the temper of the House, reasonable up to this point, then became difficult. The conduct of the King was impugned, and grievances were explored. James's pusillanimous sacrifice of Walter Ralcigh on the scaffold to the political demands of Spain in 1618, had provoked a public resentment which still lingered, and to many members of the new Parliament the King was deeply suspect for what was remembered as the gross

betrayal of a subject. And so, in voting supplies the House imposed a condition, to be asserted with growing emphasis during the coming years, that there should be no relief of the King's necessities without a redress of the people's grievances.

The King at once grew restive, but he was too deeply involved with Parliament to take abrupt action, and before he could bring himself to send a mutinous House about what he conceived to be its business, much salutary work had been done. An attack was launched against the minor satellites of Court favour, who revolved in the light of their master, Buckingham. Sir Giles Mompesson, the prototype of Massinger's Overreach and the licensee of lucrative monopolies, among them those on charcoal and gold and silver thread, not content with what were privileges of doubtful legality, became also a privileged cheat. He was accused by Parliament of using base metal for his thread and sentenced to degradation from knighthood, imprisoned for life and fined £10,000. He escaped part of his punishment by flight, but the sentence was none the less exemplary. Edward Villiers, Buckingham's half-brother and member for Westminster, was conveniently removed to service beyond the seas under charges of speculation. Sir Henry Yelverton, the Attorney-General, was sent to the Tower, convicted of having exploited his official powers for private ends. This reforming zeal in the House of Commons was very distasteful, not to say disturbing, to the Court party, although victims such as Mompesson, Villiers and Yelverton were men of no great consequence. But the purifying element in James's third Parliament struck fatally

at a head far loftier than any of these. It impeached and destroyed Francis Bacon, bringing a public career of the highest splendour and achievement to an end of self-confessed disgrace.

It is unlikely that the most specious arguments could justify Giles Mompesson's traffic in adulterated gold, but in many of these cases individually there was no doubt something to be said for the culprits. It is not certain that the institution of monopoly, bad as it was in principle, was always operative to the common detriment in practice. Bacon, who a few months before his own impeachment had conducted the prosecution of Yelverton, was forbidden by the King to enter any defence, in the hope that his fall would pacify the Commons and put a stop to further investigations which might involve Buckingham himself. The King in return remitted the crushing sentence of fine and imprisonment that was passed on the Lord Chancellor. No one could suppose, however, that Bacon would have withheld his defence if he could have offered one in which he had any reasonable hope of succeeding. His pathetic cry of submission to his peers, to the Upper House that was in fact executing the commands of the Lower House : ' My lords, it is my act, my hand, and my heart. I beseech your Lordships to be merciful to a broken reed,' was wrung from a knowledge of guilt about which there can be no doubt. Nevertheless, even in this major tragedy of public corruption, the guilt was certainly painted in the blackest colours possible. Bacon in his ruin could plead with truth that his misdemeanours were a common practice of his age ; and while he freely accepted irregular

payments from successful litigants in his courts, his judgments were never to be bought. So that the disciplinary action in which John Hampden took a modest part during his first Parliament was far less significant in its practical and immediate results, even with Bacon's disgrace among them, than as a symptom of the mood that was more and more to dominate parliamentary assemblies in England, until it rose towards the abolition of a corrupt monarchy in the opening session of 1640.

In this atmosphere the tension between James and his Parliament daily became more acute. The House was not content merely to accept the King's assurances about European affairs; it made bold to offer advice, issuing grave warnings about Popish dangers, and expressing strong disapproval of the proposed alliance with the royal house of Spain. James, in the spirit that his son was very faithfully to inherit, told them that these matters of State were 'beyond their reach and capacity,' and bade them in future to avoid meddling 'with what concerned his honour and government alone.' The House was instant in its reply. It appointed a committee of twelve members to inform the King that the House was properly concerned in all matters of State, and that liberty of speech in their discussion was a privilege that was not at the King's discretion. James, when he heard that the twelve members were approaching, gave a touch of elaborate humour to his anger. He ordered that twelve chairs should be placed in the presence-chamber, exclaiming, 'Chairs! Chairs! —a'God's name, here be twelve kings a-coming!' But if the jest eased his temper, it did no more.

It was in vain that he declared their privileges to be derived 'from the grace and permission' of his ancestors alone. The House promptly retaliated by passing the Protestation, in which it was laid down that :

'the liberties, franchises, privileges, and jurisdictions of Parliament are the ancient and undoubted birthright and inheritance of the subjects of England ; and that the arduous and urgent affairs concerning the king, state, and defence of the realm, and Church of England, and the maintenance and making of laws and redress of mischiefs and grievances which daily happen within this realm, are proper subject and matter of counsel and debate in Parliament ; and that in the handling and proceeding of those businesses every member of the House of Parliament hath, and of right ought to have, freedom of speech to propound, treat, reason, and bring to conclusion the same ; and that the Commons in Parliament have like liberty and freedom to treat of these matters in such order as in their judgments shall seem fittest. And that every member of the said House hath like freedom from all impeachment, imprisonment, and molestation (otherwise than by censure of the House itself) for or concerning any speaking, reasoning, or declaring any matter or matters touching the Parliament, or Parliament business. And that if any of the said members be complained of and questioned for anything done or said in Parliament, the same is to be shewed to the king by the advice and assent of all the Commons assembled in Parliament before the king give credence to any private information.'



A principal agent in this protest was John Selden, who declared it to be the second Magna Charta. James in futile petulance ordered the Journals of the House to be brought to him, and with his own hand struck out the offending record. He dissolved Parliament and committed nine of its members to prison, among them being John Pym, Sir Edward Coke, the great lawyer, and Selden himself. Rushworth, the chronicler, ingenuously tells us that in some of these instances the sentence of imprisonment was remitted for the 'lighter punishment of service on a commission in Ireland.' Among Hampden's fellow members in the Parliament of 1621 was Thomas Wentworth, who was to become Earl of Strafford, himself also sitting for the first time.

The Court was already aware of Hampden as a young man whose interest was worth cultivating. The corrupt distribution of peerages, which, under the direction of the notorious Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset, had become an open public scandal, was governed by two considerations. The recipient must either be able to pay handsomely, or he must bring valuable personal authority to the King's party in the House of Lords. The ideal candidate would be one who could fulfil both these conditions. In 1620 Hampden's mother wrote to one Anthony Knyvett, 'if ever my son will seek for his honour, tell him now to come; for here is multitudes of lords a-making. . . . I am ambitious of my son's honour, which I wish were now conferred upon him, that he might not come after so many new creations.' Mrs. Hampden no doubt had good reasons for the confidence that any advances would be favourably

received, but her son had no fancy for the kind of elevation that was then the mode. His first experience in Parliament would make him less than ever inclined to associate himself by any pledge with a Court that in its behaviour was repudiating every principle of public decency. The intentions of the young patriot were as yet not clearly defined, but in view of what he had seen of the way in which the country was being exploited he determined to remain a free agent.

James and Buckingham persisted in their maladministration. The favourite, high-handed, impudent, and totally indifferent alike to public good and public censure, encouraged his master in any expedient that would maintain the Court of England in its character of a royal but unsavoury lotus land. Never, perhaps, in the history of the country has the State fallen into such a lethargy as in the closing years of James I's reign. In 1624 the King summoned a new Parliament, which sat for a few months. He dissolved it with the expressed intention of recalling it in the following year. But in March, 1625, he died, closing a featureless and ignoble reign. Charles, succeeding to the throne at the age of twenty-five, inherited his father's obstinacy. He also inherited Buckingham.

It was, however, an obstinacy now with a difference, an obstinacy far more purposeful than had ever been displayed by James. Unsound in judgment, devoid of inspiration, and incapable of learning by experience, Charles was not indolent. The instinct of James was always to give the least possible attention to government so long as his personal comfort was

indulged. With the accession of Charles the Crown assumed a wholly new character. From first to last Charles governed badly, but he really did attempt to govern. He never began to understand the nature of his calling as king, but he was very actively interested in it. Buckingham, who was eight years older than the young monarch, was not unequal to the new occasion. Although he was a voluptuary, he had an appetite for political adventure. Under James it had been his care to indulge this without making any severe demands upon his master's attention. Now under Charles, if the head of the State showed a determination to take an active part in State affairs, Buckingham was a ready conspirator. For the tragedy of the association between George Villiers and the second Stuart was that it was at no time anything better than a conspiracy. It is probable that the malady of Charles's political character was incurable from the first, but it was greatly aggravated during the first three years of his reign by the influence of Buckingham, who died at the hands of a crazed assassin in 1628. By that time any hope that Charles might accommodate his mind to the rising conscience of the country was at an end. James had provoked spasmodic protests from the people, but anything in the nature of organised revolt was hardly possible against a king who made so little personal impact upon public life. The self-assertion of Charles, giving the monarchy a much more decisive appearance than it had assumed since the time of Elizabeth, at once began to quicken the nebulous discontent that had been provoked by James and to transform it into an

articulate resolution that rapidly became a national cause. James did his people no good, but he had no particular wish to interfere with them so long as he could be left alone. He simply was not interested in them. Charles also did his people no good, but with constantly misguided principles he wanted to interfere with them very much indeed. Finding that they disputed his views as to what was to their advantage, he pertinaciously attempted to show them their proper place. The challenge thus thrown out was accepted, and the Puritan revolution had begun.

Hampden had been partly instrumental in restoring the right of free election to certain country boroughs that on account of their independent spirit had been deprived of it by the Crown. He was now returned by one of these, Wendover in the County of Buckinghamshire, to Charles's first Parliament in 1625. It was a fitting augury.

## v

No sooner had Charles met his first Parliament than the quarrel which was to be the burden of his reign asserted itself. The King demanded money to support the Spanish war in the Netherlands. Parliament asked for information, and could get none. All it knew about the affair was that one expedition, sent to Holland at the instigation of Buckingham, had ended disastrously with nine thousand casualties in a force of twelve thousand men. The House informed Charles that it would give him £140,000 and proposed to discuss the

redress of the grievances. Charles was indignant that so paltry a sum should be offered when ten times as much could hardly serve his needs, and told them in effect to keep their grievances to themselves. Tempers rose, and when, after a first dissolution, Parliament met a second time in 1626, Charles had reason to remember the warning uttered by his father when as Prince he had joined Buckingham in an attack upon a minister of the Crown. 'You will live,' James had said, 'to have your belly full of impeachments.' For now the Commons proceeded to the impeachment of Buckingham himself. In order to save his favourite Charles dismissed Parliament, to return with Buckingham to his career of insolvency. He had done nothing but harden the temper of the people against him, and stiffen his own obstinate mind. Bacon had once said to a Lord Treasurer, who had flexible views about public funds: 'Remember ever that a Parliament will come.' It would have been fortunate for Charles if he could have heard or heeded such advice. But for him, in the matter of Parliaments, out of sight was out of mind from the first.

Hampden was now thirty-two years of age, and already a figure of some note at Westminster. During Charles's first and second Parliaments, not only do we find him active in committee, but at the dissolution in 1626 he received the distinction of being specially marked for Court disapproval. Charles, failing to get his money from Parliament, resorted to the old expedient of a forced loan, the usual course being followed of naming among those to be fined, for in practice it amounted to that, certain members of

Parliament who had been troublesome in opposition to the Court. John Hampden was now so designated and with prophetic fitness declined to pay. Asked to give a reason for his refusal, he replied that 'he would be content to lend, as well as others, but feared to draw upon himself that curse in Magna Charta which should be read twice a year against those who infringe it.' The Privy Council refusing to accept his own recognisances although, in Nugent's words, 'answerable with a landed property nearly the largest possessed by any commoner in England,' he was imprisoned in the Gate-house. On his second appearance before the Council, he repeated that nothing could alter his resolution not to pay, and he was again committed to custody, this time under less rigorous conditions in the country. The confinement is said to have left its marks on him for life.

More important to Hampden, however, than any part that he took in the proceedings of these Parliaments was the impression made upon him by the events that he witnessed at Westminster. The young King had come to the throne amidst the customary rejoicings. Any successor to a bad government is at all times likely to be regarded as a potential saviour of the country, and there was plenty of popular goodwill for Charles to capitalise had he been able to do so. His earlier public proceedings in Parliament, however, made it clear that any kind of progressive conciliation was beyond the scope of his mind. Hampden, energetic in action as he was to prove himself, was a characteristic representative of the landed squirearchy, a body of men with substantial interests to protect, of conservative though independent minds, and

constitutionally moderate in opinion. The noisy and undisciplined fanatics who were later to attach themselves to the Puritan revolution at no time expressed its real spirit. They were the sort of people who are always lounging round the corner ready to take part in any row that's on. When later they sometimes got out of hand, they could behave as insensately as the worst of the Court bullies, but it is a mistake to let them fill any considerable part of the picture that is the Puritan revolution. They were one of its unlucky accidents, an unpleasant nuisance at the time, but forming no deep impression on its character, and except as a popular legend leaving no effects upon its results. The real and abiding power of the revolution, which has influenced the life of every Englishman down to the present day, sprang from such men as Hampden, who in their early negotiations with the Crown were genuinely pacific in intention and earnestly desired to see the monarchy adapting itself to the needs of a new moral consciousness in the nation, just as the Tudors had adapted themselves to a splendid physical consciousness of an earlier age. To go for a moment beyond the date of Hampden's story, it may be observed that there was no more significant circumstance in the course of the revolution than Cromwell's ceaseless effort, after all the bloodshed of the Civil War, to bring Charles to his senses and re-establish him on the throne under national sanction and authority.

It was, then, with nothing less than consternation that men like Hampden saw all hopes of an enlightened monarchy frustrated from the first by Charles's high-handed repudiation of every popular claim. Anything

like our modern idea of democracy was far beyond the speculation of Hampden and his friends. Class consciousness was an integral part of their tradition and their daily life. Many of their estates were run in almost feudal circumstance. The proposition that all men are born equal would hardly have been more than an empty phrase even to the most enlightened of them. But along with the conviction that every man should know his place and keep it, there was a conviction also that each man in his place was invested with certain rights that were held at nobody's discretion, not even the King's. The most obvious of these were security against imprisonment without trial and control over taxation through an elected Parliament. It did not concern the Puritan leaders to enquire how far back in history these privileges were established by law or custom. These men were conscious only of a determination that however much the rights had been abused in the past they should henceforth be respected. And in practice both were being continually denied. Charles and his agents, sometimes through the operation of the Star Chamber and sometimes by even less excusable methods, stretched over the liberty of the subject a long and menacing arm from which no man was safe, while Parliament had only to show the first sign of spirit in its dealings to find itself expelled from Westminster by the King, who thereupon fell back on the forced loans, the payment of which was exacted with the utmost rigour and even ferocity.

Beyond these elementary principles of Puritan policy was the subtler and as yet far less definite conception of freedom in opinion and speech. It



must be conceded that in practice this ideal was never completely realised during the revolution, and, further, we cannot pretend that we have fully realised it yet. Nevertheless, it was an idea in the Puritan mind, and if it was, and remains, but imperfectly realised at best, this is a case in which it may be decidedly urged that half a loaf is better than no bread. Such measure of free thought and free speech as is enjoyed by the English-speaking world to-day, and it is a far more substantial measure than can be appreciated by people who have not lived under a privileged tyranny, we owe to our Puritan forefathers. It was while Hampden sat in the first Parliaments of Charles I that determination to this end began to take coherent form.

Characteristic of the King's conduct in those Parliaments was his behaviour in respect of Buckingham's impeachment. The charges against Buckingham were so grave and so circumstantial that it could have taken no impartial jury five minutes to bring in a verdict against him. The question of Buckingham's guilt or innocence, however, had no place in the King's view of the proceedings. Charles's mind was engaged by one sole consideration, which was the temerity of Parliament in attacking his favourite. It so happened that Charles had a personal attachment for Buckingham as strong as it was misplaced, but even had his personal sentiment towards the minister been one of indifference, he would have been none the less incensed by the presumption of his Commons.

Buckingham himself was sure of his master and treated the House with contempt, openly insulting

the officer who had drawn up the articles against him. One of the most active promoters of the impeachment was John Eliot, who although he was only two years Hampden's senior already shared with John Pym the leadership of the opposition against the Court in the House of Commons. A man of great purity of character, his high-minded patriotism was now put to a severe test. He had been on terms of friendship with Buckingham and was reluctant to accept evidence of the minister's corrupt or, as many said, treasonable practices. Once he was convinced, however, Eliot set all personal feelings aside in the performance of what he now conceived to be a public duty, and attacked Buckingham with the full force of his grave ability. It was in an atmosphere heavy with augury that he declared to an intent House, 'Our honour is ruined, our ships are sunk, our men perished, not by the enemy, not by chance, but by those we trust.' Everyone knew that Buckingham was aimed at. The Minister with a bold front said that he cared not if they named him, but he was no fool and he knew how strongly the tide was moving. The articles presented against him were wide in their scope. He was accused of the sale of offices and the reservation of many of the most lucrative to himself, of purchasing others for his private emolument at the expense of the State, of neglecting his duty as admiral, 'whereby pirates infested our coasts, and trade decayed,' of the theft of goods and jewels to the value of twenty thousand pounds from the ship *Peter* while in the port of Newhaven, of extorting large sums of money from merchantmen under threat of withholding their papers, of 'embezzling

the King's money, and procuring to himself of crown lands of great value,' one of the members computing the sum at over a quarter of a million pounds, and, finally, of having been a party to the murder of James I by poisoning. The last charge was no more than the frivolous product of the popular tendency to associate the death of kings, and indeed of any great person, with poison, but Charles and Buckingham knew that there was far more truth in the rest of the articles than could be investigated with safety. When the impeachment had been laid before the House, Eliot delivered an unsparing epilogue to the indictment, strongly emphasising the tone of the prologue that had already been spoken by Sir Dudley Digges. The King thereupon sent a message to these members, summoning them from the House to attend upon his presence. Little suspecting what the sequel would be, they submitted to the command, and on leaving Westminster were committed under a royal warrant to the Tower of London. The Commons, incensed by a gross abuse of privilege, closed their doors and announced that they would proceed in no other business until the outrage upon their liberties was redressed.

Charles realised that he had gone a step too far, and with what grace he could ordered Digges and Eliot to be released. But in the meantime, with reckless indifference to the realities of the situation, he went out of his way further to inflame the opposition by bestowing yet a fresh mark of his favour on the Duke at the very moment of impeachment. The Chancellorship of Cambridge University was vacant, and Charles sent a message through Laud, who had

recently been made Bishop of Bath and Wells, desiring Convocation to elect Buckingham to the office. The University, very conscious of the dishonour with which the proposed candidate was threatened, desired that the election should at least be postponed until the result of the impeachment was known. Court agents got to work, and dealt effectively with the elements of obstruction. 'Masters belabour their fellows. Dr. Maw [Master of Trinity] sends for his, one by one, to persuade them, some twice over. Divers in town got hackneys, and fled, to avoid importunity. Many, some whole Colleges, were gotten, by their fearful masters, the bishop, and others, to suspend, who otherwise were resolved against the Duke, and kept away with much indignation.' The House of Commons, proposing to address a letter of protest to Cambridge, was forbidden by the King. Buckingham was elected, and Charles sent his congratulations to the University on their wise and acceptable loyalty. With this act of entirely gratuitous folly following on the arrest of the members, Charles knew that he had destroyed any hope of conciliation with Parliament and any chance of Buckingham's acquittal if the impeachment were allowed to proceed. Rumour reached Westminster of the King's intention to dissolve Parliament, and the Commons drew up a petition against the dislocation of government in view of the serious condition of the nation. Charles announced that they should hear from him on the following day, which they did, with notice of summary dismissal. 'Thus,' says Whitelock, 'this great, warm, and ruffling Parliament had its Period.'

Freed again from even the pretence of parliamentary control, Charles and Buckingham blundered from one excess to another. It is true that the King, in order to make some show of respecting public morality, went so far as to order the articles of Buckingham's impeachment to be laid as an information in the Star Chamber. The case, however, did not come to hearing, nor was there any intention that it should. For the rest, the Crown continued openly to defy the country. Parliament printed a Remonstrance against its dissolution, and the King suppressed it by proclamation. The Privy Council, under authority of the Great Seal, gave the King leave to exploit the customs as he wished. William Noy, the King's Attorney-General, devised a scheme to raise money in London and the other Ports for providing ships. Protests from County Lieutenants and Justices of the Peace against this irregular and unsanctioned method of taxation were received with contempt. London, rated at twenty ships, did not go so far as to repudiate liability, but merely submitted that the assessment was too high, pleading precedence. The King's Council replied that 'the precedents in former times were obedience and not direction.' Inhabitants of the sea coast, who moved inland in order to escape what they considered to be an illegal levy, were ordered under payment of heavy punishment to return to their estates. The country was put under martial law, forced musters were raised on the plea of threatened invasion, and under a system of undisciplined billeting peaceful householders were victimised by the excesses of a conscripted soldiery. Families in humble stations of life who were so hardy as to express any disapproval

of these arbitrary proceedings and had no money with which to pay for their offence, found their men-folk pressed for service in the Navy or in the armies overseas.

It must be borne in mind always that the growing opposition to the King's conduct was directed not against this or that particular action, but against an arbitrary monarchy that steadily refused to acknowledge Parliamentary control. The actual administration of the country under Charles when Parliament was not sitting, whatever may have been the justification for some of his measures, was indefensibly bad. But had it been very much better than it was, the objection in principle would still have been valid. The King, however, made no effort to lend his autocracy any colour of good sense or justice. His enactments all along the line could not have been more exactly calculated to incite responsible opinion against him. And in this wanton abuse of his office he was abetted not only by Buckingham but by a powerful faction of obedient Court divines. Roger Mainwaring, rector of St. Giles's-in-the-Fields, in London, asserted from the pulpit that those who questioned the royal prerogative to levy taxes would undoubtedly be damned, while Robert Sibthorp, of St. Sepulchre's, in Northampton, preached in more general terms that the King might not only make laws, but that in all matters he was at liberty to do whatever he pleased. The insufficiency of Parliaments became almost an article of salvation in the Christian churches. George Abbott, the venerable Archbishop of Canterbury, shocked at this cynical suborning of his faith, refused to licence Sibthorp's

sermon for the press and was removed from his office.

In the midst of these disorders Charles cherished a hope that some spectacular success in arms would place him in a position to call a Parliament to which he could dictate. The design was ruined by Buckingham's disastrous expedition to the Isle of Rhé, where, instead of relieving the Protestants of La Rochelle, the English force was decisively beaten by the French, less than half of the seven thousand troops returning to England. The crisis at the Court was now desperate, and Charles was at length persuaded that there was nothing for it but to summon a new Parliament. He would meet them with even less credit than he had enjoyed at the last dissolution.

## VI

The new Parliament met at Westminster on March 17th, 1628. Hampden, released from his confinement, again sat for Wendover; Eliot, who had again been imprisoned, this time for refusing to pay the forced loan, was also in his place; John Pym sat for Tavistock; the great lawyer, Sir Edward Coke, now an irascible old man of seventy-six, for Buckinghamshire; John Selden for Ludgershall, in Oxfordshire; Thomas Wentworth for Yorkshire; while sitting in his first Parliament was Oliver Cromwell, the new member for Huntingdon.

The King warned them at once that unless they got on with their business, which was to vote supplies, he must use such means as he thought fit to prevent the ruin of the country. He also intimated that he

was graciously disposed to overlook their past offences. The Commons were neither impressed by the advice, nor grateful for the indulgence. At the end of their first debate it was resolved that no freeman ought to be imprisoned without cause shown either by the King or by the Council, that if no cause of commitment were returned the party was to be bailed, and that no tax ought to be imposed without assent of Parliament. Then for a moment there appeared to be some chance of accommodation. The House petitioned the King against Romish influences in the State, and received a reassuring answer. It also received a message that reports of Buckingham's opposition to the summoning of Parliament were groundless, and that the Minister had indeed been foremost in advising it. They thereupon made a vote of supplies on a scale that deluded the Court into the belief that grace was coming to the representative mind. But the lull was of brief duration. Having made a gesture of goodwill, the House settled down to its real purpose, which was the old one of forcing the King to acknowledge the authority of Parliament. After some preliminary debate, during which Wentworth led an attempt to moderate the King's obstinacy, the Commons sent in to the King the great charter of English liberty known as the Petition of Right, making the payment of the subsidies subject to its acceptance. The demands of the Petition were simple but decisive. Recognition of the popular rights upon which a vote had been taken at the opening of the session was to be given perpetual authority under the royal signet. The King employed every stratagem to escape the necessity



with which he was now unequivocally confronted. He told the House that he was in sympathy with their aspirations ; they could rely on right being done according to the laws and on the statutes being put into due execution. Pym replied that there was no need for the King to give his word that the laws would be respected, since he was pledged to their support in his coronation oath. General assurances were no longer of any value ; what was demanded was the King's name to the Petition. ' There has been a public violation of the laws, and the subject's liberties,' was the message sent through the Speaker, ' and we will have a public remedy.' To add point to their contention they proceeded against Mainwaring for his sermon advancing the King's absolute power, and secured his conviction. Sir Robert Heath, the Attorney-General, deputed by the King to attack the Petition, was abruptly informed by Coke that ' It was not under Mr. Attorney's cap to answer any one of these arguments.' Realising that Buckingham's name could not long be kept out of the debates, the King sent a message to the House enjoining them to ' lay no aspersions upon the Government or Ministers of State.' Eliot rose to speak, and the Speaker interposed with as strange words as ever came from the Chair of the House : ' There is a command upon me that I must command you not to proceed in this matter.' Old Edward Coke, long past caring for the King or any man, straightly named Buckingham as the cause of all their miseries, and demanded that the original impeachment should stand. Selden seconded the motion. In the town popular feeling ran high.

A miserable astrologer named John Lambe was beaten to death in the streets by a mob of apprentices who denounced him as the Duke's devil. The Council called upon the Lord Mayor to punish the culprits, but no one could be found to lay information. At length, on June 7th, the King yielded to pressure that no ingenuity could relax, and signed the Petition. But, fearful still for Buckingham, he prorogued Parliament on the 26th, and had the charges against his Minister struck off the files of the Star Chamber. Two months later, Buckingham, bound for a second expedition to La Rochelle, was stabbed to death by John Felton at Portsmouth. There is a stark reality in Whitelock's account of the event :

‘ Rochelle being besieged, the Duke was appointed to go with the Fleet to relieve it, and being for that end at Portsmouth, with much company, he was suddenly stabbed to the heart, by one Lieutenant Felton ; and fell down presently, crying the Villain hath slain me, and so died. When some that came in suspected Monsieur Soubise to have done it ; Felton stepped forth, and said “ I am he that did it, let no innocent man suffer for it,” and so was apprehended, not offering to escape, and was sent to prison.

‘ Many in London resort to Felton, in prison, he saith he is sorry for his Fact, but he was induced to it by the Parliament's Remonstrance. The same he said to the Council ; and denied that the Puritans, or any other set him on, or knew of his Purpose.

‘ Bishop Laud told him, if he would not confess, that he must go to the Rack, he said, he knew not

whom he might accuse, perhaps Bishop Laud, or any other in that Torture. The Council, by the King's Directions, sent to the Judges for their Opinions, whether he might be racked by the Law. They all agreed, that by the Law he might not be put to the Rack.

'Felton was tried at the King's-bench, and had Judgment of Death, he showed Remorse, and offered his Hand to be cut off, which the King desired might be done ; but the Judges said, it could not be done by Law, and he was hanged in Chains.'

Parliament reassembled from its prorogation in January, 1629, and there was the inevitable crop of grievances to reap. The Petition of Right had been tampered with in the press. The goods of certain merchants, who had opposed the King's levies, had been seized. The Crown was still appropriating tonnage and poundage to its own use. Popish influences were reasserting themselves. Pym moved 'To take a Covenant to maintain our Religion and Rights.' One of the merchants whose goods had been seized was a member of the House of Commons. The action was declared to be a breach of privilege, and the Speaker being called to put the question, declared that 'he durst not, for that the King had demanded the contrary.' At a later sitting they again called upon him to put the question, and again he refused. Attempting to leave the Chair, he was held down by force while the doors of the House were locked. A protest was then read, and passed that 'Whosoever should bring in Innovation of Religion, Popery or Armenianism,

and any that should advise the taking of Tonnage and Poundage, not granted by Parliament, or that should pay the same, should be accounted enemies of the Kingdom.' The King sent for the Serjeant of the House, but the royal messenger could not obtain permission. He returned only to report that tumult was taking place within the locked doors, whereupon Black Rod, reinforced by the Captain of the Guard, was sent to order an adjournment, but the doors were not opened to them until the vote passing the Protest had been taken. As soon as the members had left the House, the King issued a proclamation dissolving Parliament. The benches at Westminster were to remain empty for eleven years.

Hampden was now thirty-five, and was regarded as one of the leaders of the Parliamentary party. The influence of his birth and rank had been augmented by the sufferings that he had endured in defence of his principles. Arbitrary imprisonment in the Tower under the King's displeasure was a bleak experience, and Hampden could have avoided it without incurring any particular odium among his friends. He also displayed a resolution of spirit that was exactly suited to the new national temper. And so, during the sessions of the Petition of Right Parliament his services on Committee were constantly in demand. He was engaged on a great variety of business. The emigration of young people for Popish education abroad, the billeting of soldiers, the pressing of men for foreign service, the foundation of the Charter House, corruption in Ministers, the detention of Turkish ships for the payment of tonnage

and poundage, the affairs of Trinity House, and the neglect of preaching in the churches, were among the matters to which his attention was given. Although Parliament was to be closed to him and his countrymen for more than a decade, his mind was well furnished with an experience of public affairs that fitted him eminently for the part that he was to take during the coming years in the struggle between the King, who now threw off all pretence of responsible government, and a country that was excluded from the councils of its own affairs.

Charles signalled his regained liberty from the importunities of Parliament by an act of characteristic flagrancy. He imprisoned those members of the late House who had incurred his particular displeasure by their insurgency, among them John Eliot, who was to remain in the Tower until he died three years later in circumstances of singular brutality. Charles, however, was now finally established in his indifference to public opinion and in his disregard of public interests. When in 1629 he dissolved his third Parliament he was more than ever determined never to call another if in any way it could be avoided. In this design he was encouraged by circumstances which gave his arbitrary government a much firmer basis than it had hitherto known. Buckingham's place as chief adviser to the Crown was taken by Thomas Wentworth.

No man could have done more to aggravate the abuses of tyrannical monarchy and the personal defects of Charles's character than George Villiers, first Duke of Buckingham. If any man could have redeemed these, it is probable that Thomas Wentworth

would have succeeded. From the advocacy of the popular case when the Petition of Right was passing through the House, he had moved by a rapid evolution of thought to denial of many of the Puritan principles with which he had then found himself associated. Advocate though he might be of people's rights, the doctrine of popular authority was repugnant to his highly aristocratic intellect. He realised that the King was ill-advised and short-sighted in his coercions, and while Buckingham was alive he did his best to mitigate the influence of a Minister whom he knew to be incompetent and corrupt. But there was no room in his dominating and exclusive mind for the view that because the supreme power was unwisely employed by the King it could properly be assumed by the people. Although, therefore, his desire for Court reform brought him for a short time into opposition, it soon became evident that there could never be any effective sympathy between himself and the great Puritan leaders. Whatever assurances might pass from the Commons to the Palace at Whitehall that it was in no event the purpose of the House to encroach upon the King's prerogative, it had now become clear to all intelligent observers that the responsible leaders of what had already become a revolution were fixed upon the permanent destruction of the Crown's autocracy. But Wentworth was and always remained an autocrat at heart, and the King for him was the only symbol of autocratic government to which in his mind there was no alternative worth considering. Within these limitations Wentworth was a high-minded gentleman of courage and

intelligence, but anything like intimacy with the people's mind he would have regarded as contamination. He believed as firmly as Charles himself that it was the people's place to do as they were told by the King. His only complaint was that the King, under bad advice, had been dangerously indiscreet in his management of prerogative, and he was genuinely convinced that if he himself could control the royal policy a stop would be put to the rising agitation, and all would be well. It must be allowed that the enormity of this conviction was emphasised by the rare capacity of Wentworth's mind.

Charles showed unusual acumen in realising that Wentworth was his chance. It is true that in the long run the choice was to save neither of them from disaster, but for several years uncontrolled power of the Crown, which would certainly have collapsed under a few more months of Buckingham's influence, was maintained by Wentworth's firmness and ingenuity. As soon as the King saw that this remarkable man was open to approaches, he made them. Wentworth was first appointed President of the Council of the North, and created a Viscount; in the following year he was admitted to the Privy Council. He was now thirty-six years of age, and from that time he and William Laud, twenty years his senior and now Bishop of London, were with Charles the effective governors of England until the day of reckoning in 1640. It was then that Bacon's words, 'Remember that a Parliament will come,' were justified, but it was only in defiance of all the resolution and stratagems of these three men. If they could have formulated their ideal of the earthly

paradise, it would have been a perpetual government of England without any Parliament at all. The story goes that Wentworth, newly made a peer, meeting Pym, said to the great Commoner, 'Well, you see I have left you,' to which Pym replied, 'Yes, my Lord, but we will never leave you while that head is on your shoulders.'



## CHAPTER II

### CHARLES, LAUD AND WENTWORTH

#### I

AFTER the dissolution of 1629 Hampden for a time retired from public life to his Buckinghamshire estate. Here, while leading the life of a country gentleman, he diverted himself also by the reading of history, not only for pleasure in the study itself, but also for the enlargement of a mind that was so closely engaged in the history that was then shaping. He brooded long on political and on ecclesiastical reform, knowing that these were topics that were to involve more deeply yet the men of his own generation. The new equilibrium which the Court under Wentworth's guidance seemed to be acquiring did not for a moment deceive him. He and his friends had been sent back to their homes, but he knew very well that sooner or later they would return to the attack re-invigorated by their suspended activity. The issues that had been raised were far too deeply written on their minds to suffer effacement. Even had the refreshed authority of the Crown been benevolently exercised the doctrine of popular control would still have waited upon its inevitable time. But while abuses under Wentworth were far more ably organised than they had been under Buckingham,

they remained, and the Puritan leaders in retirement had constant occasion for keeping their purpose bright. Under Wentworth and Laud much of the old State mismanagement disappeared. Frivolous enterprises and open corruption were no longer the practice of government, but the enactments of Charles's Council were enforced with a merciless rigour that afforded daily examples of oppression upon which Puritan imagination could brood.

An instance of particular malice came very near to Hampden's heart. His work in Parliament had brought him into close association with John Eliot, for whom he had formed a strong personal affection. Eliot was thirty-seven years of age when he was imprisoned after the dissolution of 1629. He had expected trouble, and seemed to have made material provision against it. On being fined two thousand pounds, he observed that he had 'two cloaks, a few books and two pairs of boots and gallashees, and that was all his personal substance, and if they could pick up two thousand pounds out of that, much good might it do them.' It soon became evident that his health could not stand the rigours of confinement in the Tower, and the progress of his illness is told us in a document to be found among the Harleian MSS. :

'A gentleman, not unknown to Sir Thomas Lucy, told me from my Lord Cottington's mouth, that Sir John Eliot's late manner of proceeding was this. He first presented a petition to his Majesty by the hand of the Lieutenant his keeper, to this effect.

“ Sir, your Judges have committed me to prison here in your Tower of London, where, by reason of the quality of the air, I am fallen into a dangerous disease. I humbly beseech your Majesty you will command your Judges to set me at liberty, that for recovery of my health I may take some fresh air.” Whereupon his Majesty’s answer was, it was not humble enough. Then Sir John sent another petition by his own son to the effect following. “ Sir, I am heartily sorry I have displeased your Majesty, and, having so said, do humbly beseech you, once again, to set me at liberty, that, when I have recovered my health, I may return back to my prison, there to undergo such punishment as God hath allotted unto me.” Upon this the Lieutenant came and expostulated with him, saying it was proper to him, and common to none else, to do that office of delivering petitions for his prisoners. And if Sir John, in a third petition, would humble himself to his Majesty in acknowledging his fault and craving pardon, he would willingly deliver it, and made no doubt but he should obtain his liberty. Unto this, Sir John’s answer was,—“ I thank you (Sir) for your friendly advice : but my spirits are grown feeble and faint, which when it shall please God to restore unto their former vigour, I will take it farther into my consideration.” Sir John dying not long after, his son petitioned his Majesty once more, he would be pleased to permit his body to be carried into Cornwall, there to be buried. Whereunto was answered at the foot of the petition, “ Let Sir John Eliot’s body be buried in the Church of that parish where he died.” And, so it was buried in the Tower.’

That was a proud spirit to break, too proud indeed to be broken. While he was in the Tower he employed some of his solitary hours in writing a treatise, *The Monarchie of Man*, and he was allowed facilities for correspondence with his friends. Among these was Hampden, under whose supervision he placed the education of his two sons during his captivity. The following are examples of Hampden's letters to Eliot in the Tower :

' April 4. 1631. Sir, I hope you will receive your sons both safe, and that God will direct you to dispose of them as they may be trained up for his service and to your comfort. Some words I have had with your younger son, and given him a taste of those apprehensions he is like to find with you ; which I tell him future obedience to your pleasure, rather than justification of past passages, must remove. He professeth fair ; and the ingenuity of his nature doth it without words ; but you know virtuous actions flow not infallibly from the flexiblest dispositions : there's only a fit subject for admonition and government to work on, especially that which is paternal. I confess my shallowness to resolve, and therefore unwillingness to say anything concerning his course ; yet will I not give over the consideration ; because I much desire to see that spirit rightly managed. But, for your elder, I think you may with security return him in convenient time ; for certainly there was nothing to administer from of a plot, and, in another action that concerned himself, which he'll tell you of, he received good satisfaction of the Vice Chancellor's fair carriage towards him. I searched

my study this morning for a book to send you of a like subject to that of the papers I had of you [the manuscript of Eliot's treatise *The Monarchie of Man*], but find it not. As soon as I recover it, I'll recommend it to your view. When you have finished the other part, I pray think me as worthy of the sight of it as the former ; and in both together I'll betray my weakness to my friend by declaring my sense of them. That I did see is an exquisite nosegay, composed of curious flowers, bound together with as fine a thread. But I must in the end expect honey from my friend. Somewhat out of those flowers digested, made his own, and giving a true taste of his own sweetness ; though for that I shall awaite a fitter time and place. The Lord sanctify unto you the sourness of your present estate, and the comforts of your posterity.

Your ever the same assured friend,

JO. HAMPDEN.'

' Hampden, July 27 [1631]. Dear Sir,—I received a letter from you the last week, for which I owe you ten, to countervail those lines by excess in number that I cannot equal in weight. But time is not mine now, nor hath been since that came to my hands ; in your favour, therefore, hold me excused. This bearer is appointed to present you with a buck out of my paddock, which must be a small one to hold proportion with the place and soil it was bred in. Shortly I hope, (if I do well to hope) to see you ; yet durst I not prolong the expectation of your papers. You have concerning them laid commands upon me beyond my ability to give you satisfaction in ; but, if my apology will not serve when we meet, I will not

decline the service to the betraying of my own ignorance, which yet I hope your love will cover.

Your ever assured friend and servant,

JO. HAMPDEN.'

There was no place for more than such civilities in letters to a political prisoner, but even so the tone is enough to indicate Hampden's feelings for a man 'whose affections he accounted a noble purchase,' and to reflect the indignation with which he must have heard of his friend's pitiful death. These and the other letters to Eliot, guarded in expression as they are, are rich in companionable words. As early as 1629, when Eliot had temporarily been removed from the Tower to the Marshalsea, Hampden hoped that the change would be attended by less rigorous wardership, and asked for perusal of 'the paper of considerations concerning the plantation [of New England],' which 'after transcribing should be safely returned.' In criticism of an essay that Eliot had sent him he asks, 'Would not a less model have given a full representation of that subject? not by diminution, but by contraction, of parts. I desire to learn; I dare not say. The variations upon each particular seem many; all, I confess, excellent. The fountain was full; the channel narrow; that may be the cause; or that the author imitated Virgil, who made more verses by many than he intended to write. To extract a just number, had I seen all his, I could easily have bid him make fewer; but if he had bade me tell which he should have spared I had been apposed [*sic*]. So say I of these expressions.' Writing to Eliot of his son, he assures

him that 'if ever you live to see a fruit answerable to the promise of the present blossoms, it will be a blessing of that weight as will turn the scale against all worldly affections and dominate your life happy.' Of a recommendation from his friend he writes, 'that man you wrote for I will unfeignedly receive into my good opinion.' And elsewhere, in a postscript, 'God, I thank him, hath made me father of another son.'

In December, 1631, a year before his death, Eliot wrote to Hampden, 'That I write not to you anything of intelligence will be excused, when I do let you know that I am under a new restraint by warrant from the King, for a supposed abuse of liberty in admitting a free resort of visitants, and under that colour holding consultations with my friends; my lodgings are removed and I am now where Candle-light may be suffered but scarce fire.' He was allowed a little correspondence until March, on the 22nd of which month he wrote to Hampden, 'These three weeks I have had a full leisure to do nothing, and strictly tied unto it, either by their direction or my weakness. The cause originally was a cold, but the symptoms that did follow it spake more sickness, a general indisposition it begot in all the faculties of the body. The learned said a consumption did attend it, but I thank God I do not feel or credit it.' That Hampden replied asking urgently for further news, though the letter has been lost, is clear from Eliot's further communication dated only a week later, March 29th: 'Beyond the acknowledgement of your favour that has so much compassion on your friend, I have little to return. . . .' He continues

in a strain of almost lyrical trust in the mercy of God, and concludes on a note of deeply touching affection. Thereafter his correspondence ceased, and nothing further is recorded of him until his death in November, 1632.

Until it was suddenly involved in the capital violence of war, the Puritan revolution was not a violent one. The determination of its leaders, frustrated in Parliament, was for many years expressed in no more than passive resistance. Purpose was moulding to action of a terrible kind, but in the meantime the surface of the national life was not generally disturbed. It is probable that the majority of the people were but dimly conscious of the fact that any revolution was going on at all, and when such reverberations as reached the country from the Parliamentary struggle were silenced in 1629, the auguries would be even less widely noted by the people at large. Most of the great estates, the farms, the industries and commerce of countryside and towns went the normal way of activity as though the government of the country were serenely settled. Rushworth gives a vivid glimpse of the capital in 1629. 'At this time the City of London was in great splendour, and full of wealth, and it was then a most glorious sight to behold the Goldsmiths shops all of one row in Cheap-side, from the end of the street called the Old Change near Pater-Noster-Row, unto the open place over against Mercers-Chapel, at the lower end of Cheap.' The outward appearance of calm, and even of prosperity, may very well have led the King and Wentworth and Laud into a false sense of security. The sense was flattered by ten



years' enjoyment of arbitrary rule with immunity from public interference.

## II

The picture thus presented to the mind of the Court was, however, an entirely deceptive one. The oppressive acts of the Star Chamber and the King's Council were of almost daily occurrence, though they bore directly upon but a small minority of the people. News travelled slowly, or frequently did not travel at all, and many thousands of the King's subjects went about their business year in and year out hearing at most a rumour of the King's excesses. But for all this the excesses were being inexorably entered in the national account. A merchant would be forbidden to land his cargo at the most convenient port, if some monopolist at another would thereby lose his import charges. A country gentleman, whose opinions were objectionable to the Court, would be ordered to leave the capital and forbidden to return to it. Another would have part of his land confiscated under some pretext of public imprudence. More emphatic expressions of disapproval might be visited with the ferocious mutilations of the Star Chamber. Discontent was often unsparing in its provocation, but retribution was never at a loss. Alexander Leighton, a physician and divine from St. Andrews, dedicated a book entitled *Sion's Plea* to the late Parliament, exhorting the people to kill all the bishops by smiting them under the fifth rib, and denouncing the Romish queen as a Canaanite and idolatress. Although he was sixty years of age at the time he managed to escape from the Fleet before

the sentence of the Star Chamber could be executed upon him. The Privy Council printed a Hue and Cry for his recapture. In it he is described as a man of low status, fair complexion, with a yellowish beard and a high forehead. His age is wrongly given as being between forty and fifty. A week later he was retaken in Bedfordshire, and Rushworth quotes an entry from Laud's Diary, recording the sentence and the manner of its execution.

' 1. He was severely whipped before he was put in the Pillory.

' 2. Being set in the Pillory, he had one of his Ears cut off.

' 3. One side of his nose slit.

' 4. Branded on one cheek with a red-hot iron with the letters S.S. signifying a Stirrer up of Sedition, and afterwards carried back again prisoner to the Fleet, to be kept in close custody.

' And on that day seven night, with Sores upon his back, ear, nose and face, not being cured, he was whipped again at the Pillory in Cheap-side, and there had the remainder of his sentence executed upon him, by cutting off the other Ear, slitting the other side of his Nose, and branding the other Check.'

It is to be noted that the man who complacently entered this filthiness in his daily journal was the Bishop of London and one of the principal agents by which the dealings of the Star Chamber were sanctioned. William Prynne and John Bastwick, Henry Burton and John Lilburne, all very pertinacious agitators, were treated even more savagely,

Prynne actually having to endure the torment of having his ears cropt on two separate occasions. It might seem, to a government from whose jurisdiction there was no appeal, that these things could be done with impunity since they provoked no violent resistance. But the government was profoundly mistaken. Any interference with fair dealing in commerce or industry, every unjust confiscation of property, and every physical brutality of a kind as revolting as any known in the dark annals of history, was somewhere deeply noted in the heart of a John Hampden, a John Pym, a John Milton, or an Oliver Cromwell. And all the time while the Court, intoxicated by its own power, was pursuing a course of unbridled licence in the execution of its will, heroic if silent resolutions were being formed that before long a tyranny so corrupt and ruthless must be destroyed. Hampden, on his Buckinghamshire estate, was foremost among those with whom the purpose was daily taking deeper root.

The execution of any human being is always a fearful thing. There are many entirely unsentimental people who gravely question whether in any circumstances it can be justified. However that may be, it was inevitable that a cause which sacrificed its three principal leaders on the scaffold should be invested by time with a persistently romantic halo. When to the tragic destinies of Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford, William Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury, was added the legend of a martyred King, the Royalist story took on a glamour that was to survive the ages in a sturdy defiance of facts. There are still many people to-day who regard Charles I as a saint

who gave his life for his principles and his faith, and have hardly less veneration for Strafford and Laud. The explanation of these delusions is not far to seek. The patient investigation of historical evidence makes greater demands upon human nature than the emotional response to the tragic fate of men who have been set in high places. It is impossible to consider the destruction of Laud and Strafford and Charles without being deeply moved by the pity of circumstances so inexorable. But to go beyond this and see in the disaster of these men nothing but the martyrdom of virtue is to surrender reason entirely to an emotional unreality. The judgment delivered against them was terrible, but however much we wish that it could have been withheld, the plain fact is that no men ever more merited death at the hands of a nation than these. Together they conspired, blindly it may have been but none the less culpably for that, to the destruction of political freedom in England, and under the sanction of their general principle of government they committed repeated personal offences on the subject, the mere recital of which is sickening.

It is commonly claimed for the Royalists by their partisans that they pre-eminently were the promoters of culture and social enlightenment in the national life. The claim bears no scrutiny. 'The Puritans,' says Mr. Duncan Jones, Laud's crude and most recent biographer, 'were the enemies of reason. They clamped men's minds down to school points. This was a large part of the cause of Laud's revolt against them.' And again, Wentworth and Laud 'were at one in detesting the vulgar and rhetorical ignorance which found so abundant an outlet for its

speech in the House of Commons.' It is impossible to understand how this kind of view can be held about a party which included men whose names are already familiar in this present narrative. Hampden was a characteristic product of the class that furnished the power of the Puritan movement, and it was a class as highly cultivated and as sensitive to style as the Court. The most usual evidence advanced by Royalist advocates in support of this aspect of their plea is the King's patronage of the arts. It is true that Charles used his extensive opportunities to indulge a fine taste, and his collections, gathered together by agents in many parts of Europe, were a tribute to his artistic sagacity. At the same time, it must be remembered that fine taste in these matters was natural to the seventeenth century, and it was not necessary to go to the royal palaces to see it in operation. It certainly was not the prerogative of the Royalist or any other class. There is not a great house of the period that survives with its treasures intact in which there is not ample evidence of the instinctive culture that distinguished the age, and the smaller houses on their more modest scale shared in the general enlightenment. Architecture, printing, music, painting, the domestic crafts, costume, furniture, in all these there was the design of a people who, whatever their distractions, were still comely in their artistic habits, and had not yet been debauched in their taste by mechanical production. It was enlightened of Charles to adorn his walls with Raphaels and Titians and Michael Angelos, under the guidance of a Vandyck and a Rubens, but of greater significance than this royal connoisseurship was the high

standard of taste displayed generally among the people. It is one thing to acknowledge the merit of the King's discrimination, though it may be noted that it was difficult to collect bad things in those days, but it is quite another to insinuate that in the matter of taste he was a shining example to a vulgar age. There was nothing in his artistic culture that was beyond the understanding, however much it may have been beyond the means, of the average middle-class householder and his ladies.

A circumstance that has been much extolled by the Royalist partisans is the famous Declaration Concerning Lawful Sports. It has been used as a striking example of the liberality which is said to have distinguished the Court mind from the sour fanatic asceticism of the Puritans. Mr. Chesterton, whose wholesome gospel of conviviality is so much to be admired, once reproached me in public that being a poet I should stand as a champion of the party that, forswearing cakes and ale, made this Declaration necessary to curb its gloomy interdictions. I should agree with him were it not for what I take to be his misreading of history. The case is worth some examination. Laud is the popular Royalist hero of this occasion. The trouble began in 1633, when a complaint was made to the Council that two Judges of Assize in Somersetshire had ordered that 'in regard of the Infinite Number of Inconveniences, daily arising by means of Revels, that such Revels, Church-Ales, Clerk-Ales, and all other Public Ales be henceforth utterly suppressed,' and had directed that every minister should publish the order in his parish church. Laud, now Archbishop of

Canterbury, complained to the King that this was an unwarranted assumption of church authority by the Judges, and that the proper person to give orders to the ministers was the Bishop of the Diocese. The Chief Justice, Richardson, was summoned to appear before the Council, and, in spite of a plea that his judgment was given at the request of the Justices of the Peace in the country, and a learned citation of precedents, he was commanded to revoke his order. Laud thereupon wrote to the Bishop of Bath and Wells :

‘ There hath been of late some Noise in Somersetshire about the Feasts of the Dedications of Churches, commonly called the Wakes ; and it seems the Judges of Assize formerly made an Order to prohibit them, and caused it to be Published in some, or most of the Churches by the Minister, without my Lord the Bishop’s Consent or Privity, the pretence of this hath been, that some disorders derogatory from God’s Service, and the Government of the Commonwealth are committed at those times : by which Argument, any thing that is abused may quite be taken away. It seems that there hath been some heat struck in the Country about this, by the carriage of the Lord Chief Justice Richardson, at the two last Assizes, especially the last, with which His Majesty is not well pleased. And for the preventing of Outrages, or Disorders, at those Feasts, no man can be more careful than His Majesty ; but he conceives, and that very rightly, that all these may and ought to be prevented by the Care of the Justices of Peace, and leave the Feasts them-

selves to be kept, for the Neighbourly meeting, and Recreation of the People, of which he would not have them debarred under any frivolous pretences. And further, His Majesty hath been lately informed by men of good Place in that County, that the Humourists increase much in those Parts, and unite themselves by banding against the Feasts ; which course, as His Majesty no way likes, so he hath been informed also for this last Year, since warning was given, there have not been any noted Disorders at any of those Feasts kept in those Parts ; yet for his better satisfaction, he hath Commanded me to require you to inform your self, and give a speedy account how these Feasts have been ordered.'

At the next Assizes, Chief Justice Richardson had to eat humble pie and revoke his judgment in open Court, but the Justices of the Peace immediately drew up a Petition to the King 'showing the great Inconveniencies that would befall the County if these Meetings and Assemblies of Church-Ales, Bid-Ales and Clerk-Ales, condemned by the Laws should now be set up again.' The petition was signed by John Lord Paulet, seven knights and six gentlemen of the shire, and clearly represented the opinion not of lugubrious fanatics but of orderly and ordinary people who objected to having their peace disturbed by the licensed brawling that frequently attended these Ales. Measures of repression are always dangerous, and there were many occasions on which during the development of the Puritan revolution they were abused, but a recognition of this principle does not mean that any kind of public misbehaviour



should go unchecked. Prohibition in America has been a failure, but no decent-minded citizen can regret the abolition of the saloons, or wish to see them return in their old character. The truth in this matter of the Somerset Ales is first that Laud's ecclesiastical dignity was hurt, not unintelligibly, and secondly that he really was provoked by the Humourists, as he calls them in his letter to Bath and Wells. He had good reason to be suspicious of a temper out of which might grow a serious menace to the prelacy, and he was determined to discourage it by any means in his power. On paper, an appeal in the name of the natural social instincts of the people was likely to be popularly effective, and Laud was shrewd in making it. In fact, however, he knew that his misgivings about the conduct of the Ales were a good deal more substantially founded than he cared to admit in his letter. The Somersetshire Justices of Peace were merely trying to correct what had become a public nuisance, and Laud's liberal professions had little reference to the realities of the case. The cloven hoof was in fact seen clearly enough in the Declaration itself, which was issued just at the moment when the Somersetshire Justices were preparing the Petition against the revocation of the Assize judgment. The Declaration was a re-enactment of an earlier instrument published by James I. It takes the form of a command from Charles Rex to Canterbury that 'Our Declaration concerning Recreations on the Lord's Day after Evening Prayer, be Printed.' The preamble states that in the year 1618, King James of blessed memory finding that in certain parts of his country 'his

Subjects were debarred from Lawful Recreations, upon Sundays after Evening Prayers ended, and upon Holy days . . . he prudently considered, that if these times were taken from them, the meaner Sort, who labour hard all the Week, should have no Recreations at all, to refresh their Spirits.' This repression, it was declared, was attended by two evils: 'one, the hindering of the Conversion of many, whom their Priests will take occasion hereby to vex, persuading them that no honest Mirth or Recreation is Lawful or Tolerable in the Religion which the King professeth, and which cannot but breed a great discontentment in his People's hearts, especially of such as are peradventure upon the point of turning: The other Inconvenience is, that this Prohibition barreth the Common and Meaner sort of People from Using such Exercises, as may make their Bodies more able for War, when His Majesty or his Successors shall have occasion to use them. And in place thereof sets up Tipling and filthy Drunkenness, and breeds a number of idle and discontented Speeches in their Ale-Houses. For when shall the Common people have leave to exercise, if not upon the Sundays and Holy-days, seeing they must apply their labour, and win their Living in all Working-days?'

So far, it must be allowed, the tone expressly is one of enlightenment, although the ingenuousness with which the royal motives are stated is a little startling. The Declaration proceeds more prettily. After providing that the Laws of the Kingdom and the Canons of the Church must be preserved, and that the clergy are to be diligent in convincing such

as are misled in religion, and whose obstinacy must bring them under the execution of the law, it is ordained that after the end of divine service 'the good People be not disturbed, letted or discouraged from any Lawful Recreation, such as Dancing, either Men or Women; Archery for Men, Leaping, Vaulting, or any other such harmless Recreation, nor from having of May-Games, Whitsun-Ales, and Morrice-Dances, and the setting up of May-Poles, and other Sports therewith used: so as the same be had in due and convenient time, without impediment or neglect of Divine Service.' Women also are to 'have leave to carry Rushes to the Church for the decoring of it, according to their old Custom.' Special exclusions are made against bear and bull baitings, interludes and bowling.

If that were the substance of it all, we could not but admire Laud for his revival of so liberal a measure. But it was not all by any means; in an early paragraph of the Declaration there is a hint that this concern for popular pleasures is largely inspired by designs against 'two sorts of People wherewith [the] Country is much infected, viz. Papists and Puritans.' Later in the Declaration, bishops are instructed to take 'strict order with all . . . Puritans and Precisions,' and to constrain them either 'to conform themselves, or to leave the Country according to the Laws of this Kingdom.' But there is yet more in the conclusion. After the agreeable indulgences concerning May-poles, Wits and Ales and Morris-dances, it is enacted that no one who fails to attend the episcopal church, either through negligence or on the score of conscience, shall be allowed to enjoy

the privileges granted by the Declaration. When it is remembered that half the people in the country either from conscience or from personal disinclination had strong objections to attending the episcopal services, it will be seen that the ratification of this instrument was nothing more nor less than an exceedingly ingenious attempt on the part of Laud to impose conformity with his own church upon the people. It is true that to the majority of the population Sunday was the one day open for recreation, and it is true that to be forbidden such recreation was a very vexatious inconvenience. The Declaration put the matter simply. Conform, said Laud, to my church and enjoy yourselves, or dissent and spend your holidays in sackcloth. When it is repeated that Laud's church was also a political agency of the utmost importance in the State, it will be seen that the much-esteemed Declaration on lawful sports was less benevolent in its intentions than is sometimes supposed. With the precise terms of the Declaration before us, it is difficult to follow Mr. Duncan Jones when he observes, in his summing up of the case, 'Nothing made the country gentry so determined to have Laud's blood as his championship—for they were right in thinking he was the moving spirit—of the poor against their oppressors.'

When Hampden ultimately made his active revolt, it was uncompromising. But in the meantime he was studious in preserving his moderate attitude under all provocation. In 1634 he was called before a diocesan court to answer charges of having held 'a muster in the churchyard at Beaconsfield, and having gone sometimes from his own parish

church.' He was discharged on an undertaking to behave properly for the future.

## III

And so the King, supported, indeed guided, by the spiritual arm of Laud and the temporal arm of Wentworth, pursued without any reckoning his way of arbitrary government. Sometimes, in the operations of the Star Chamber, it was marked by a ferocity not exceeded in the annals of barbarism. Throughout the long period during which their civil and ecclesiastical powers were absolute, these three men, two of them at least able and all of them obstinate, were alike incapable of looking beyond the apparent immediate success of their design. There is nothing in history more impressive, more deeply charged with the elements of tragic destiny, than the slow but inexorable movement of the English mind towards judgment during the years when from 1625 to 1640 Charles I made the most determined and the last experiment with absolute monarchy in this country. As the scene appears before us at this long date, the formidable undertones are clear. But it would be a mistake to suppose that they were unheard at the time. The Hampdens, the Cromwells, the Pym, the Eliots and the rest of them, knew with the conviction of patriotic faith that however long the date of reckoning might be delayed, it would come. The strange thing is that the three men who most tragically were to be its victims appeared to be entirely established in their sense of security. However clearly the undertones might assert themselves elsewhere, they never seem



1. THOMAS WENTWORTH, 1st Earl of Strafford (1593-1641). *Vandyck.*
2. WILLIAM LAUD, Archbishop of Canterbury (1573-1645). *Vandyck.*
3. GEORGE VILLIERS, 1st Duke of Buckingham (1592-1628). *Jansen.*
4. KING CHARLES I (1600-1649). *Vandyck.*
5. HENRIETTA MARIA, Queen Consort of Charles I (1609-1669). *Vandyck.*
6. LUCIUS CARY, 2nd Viscount Falkland (1610-1643). *Vandyck.*
7. EDWARD HYDE, 1st Earl of Clarendon (1609-1674). *Lely.*

to have reached the impenetrable seclusions of Whitehall and Lambeth and Dublin. The possibility of having to take any further counsel of the people was now becoming so remote that Charles could afford to treat it with a graceful levity. Writing to Wentworth, then Lord Deputy in Ireland, against the continuance of Irish Parliaments, he observed, 'My reasons are grounded upon my experience of them [Parliaments] here. They are of the nature of cats; they ever grow curst with age: so that, if you will think good of them, put them off handsomely when they come to any age; for young ones are ever more tractable. And, in earnest, you will find that nothing can more conduce to the beginning of the new than the well ending of the former Parliament. Wherefore, now that we are well, let us content ourselves therewith.' In the royal conception of the future there was, in short, no place for Parliament at all.

Oblivious of the gathering menace, life at the Court, serenely confident of itself, was enlivened by many amiabilities. Even the visitations of nature were not too heavy. On December 2nd, 1632, Laud wrote in his Diary, 'The smallpox appeared upon his Majesty, but God be thanked, he had a very gentle disease of it.' One day there might be a state procession to inspect the repairs that by Laud's zeal were being made to St. Paul's church, and no misgivings were caused in the royal party by the 'new Images and Ornaments other than formerly which were set up to the discontent of many persons.' It was reassuring for the King to be told by the eager little prelate at his side that ecclesiastical

discipline was active in the service of God and that orders had recently been issued that no man of what quality so ever should presume to walk in the church during the time of divine service, that no man should profane the church by the carriage of burthens and baskets or any portage whatsoever, and that all masters of families should strictly forbid their children and servants to play at any time in the church or any way misdemean themselves in that place. On another, the 29th May, 1630, 'the Queen was brought to bed of a son, Prince Charles, to the exceeding joy of the subjects ; on the same day a bright star appeared shining at noon-day in the East.' Momentary alarm might be caused by the spectacle of a great fire on London Bridge, by which, as Laud notes, many houses were burnt down, and the susceptibilities of a Court that was at least notable for its domestic devotion might be genuinely shocked by the trial of Lord Audley for a moral offence incredibly revolting. But the graces of Whitehall were not often thus ruffled. Nothing shows more prettily the kind of influence that Charles might have had upon his kingdom if nature had endowed him with any politic sense, than the accounts of the Masques and Revels given under his patronage. Bulstrode Whitelock, as a young Bencher of the Middle Temple, sat on the committee that was formed by the Inns of Court to present a Masque to their Majesties at Candlemas, 1633, and he left a memorable record of the proceedings.

Representations were made at Court by the four Inns, the Middle Temple, the Inner Temple, Lincoln's Inn and Gray's Inn, and they were well received as



promising a seasonable answer to the influence of Prynne's recently published diatribes against such things as stage plays in his *Histriomastix*. Whereupon 'the Benchers of each Society met, and agreed to have their Solemnity performed in the noblest and most stately manner that could be invented.' The committee of management consisted of eight members, two from each Inn, and among them may be noted Selden, who like Wentworth had been taken into Court favour, and Edward Herbert, who had assisted in Buckingham's impeachment, representing the Inner Temple; William Noy for Lincoln's Inn, recently appointed Attorney-General, and presently to be the author of the Ship-money writs; for Gray's Inn, Sir John Finch, the Speaker, who had vainly tried to impose the King's wishes on the House of Commons; and with Whitelock for the Middle Temple, Edward Hyde, whose name as Clarendon was to add a distinction to the Royalist cause in history. The meetings of the committee on such an occasion must have been pleasant functions, agreeably diversified by the characters and ages of its members. Noy was fifty-six, Selden and Finch forty-nine, Herbert forty-two, Whitelock twenty-eight and Hyde twenty-four. There were two other members of whom nothing was known. A summary of Whitelocke's narrative will suggest the brighter colours of the time. Members of the committee were delegated to direct the various activities; one 'to take care of the poetical part of the business,' another of the very elaborate properties, another of the dancing, while to Whitelock himself was entrusted the supervision of the music, which, he tells us frankly, 'was so performed,

that it excelled any music that ever before that time had been heard in England.' He appointed Mr. Lawes—it is not specified whether this was Henry or William—to be master under his direction, and he also enlisted the help of 'Four of the most excellent musicians of the Queen's Chapel, Monsieur La Mere, Monsieur De Vall, Monsieur Robert, Monsieur Mari, and of divers others of foreign nations,' being careful to add that he neglected none of his own countrymen whose knowledge of music qualified them for employment. He, as all the members of the committee, was enthusiastic for the success of the undertaking, and when he had got his company of musicians together in rehearsal, Englishmen, Frenchmen, Italians and Germans working in the common cause, he had the satisfaction of hearing 'Forty lutes at one time, besides other instruments and voices of the most excellent musicians in consort.'

Candlemas night having been chosen and the production being well in hand, Whitelock and Hyde were deputed to consult with the Comptroller of the King's House as to arrangements, and royal orders were given for due preparations to be made in the great banqueting room at Whitehall. Trial rehearsals took place in the hall itself, but at the last moment dissension arose as to which members of the Inns should take precedence in the chariots of state. To overcome this difficulty, new chariots were constructed on the Roman pattern whereby the seats 'were made of an oval form in the back end of the chariot, so that there was no precedence in them and the faces of all that sat in it might be seen together.' The further vexed questions as to which Inn should have the

choice of colours, and which lead the procession were settled by a cast of the dice.

By Candlemas all was prepared, and early in the morning the committee assembled at Ely House in Holborn to conduct the great business of the day, having instructed all the Masquers to meet them there in the afternoon. As evening fell, the cavalcade was in readiness and set out in procession down Chancery Lane to Whitehall.

It was led by the Marshal with twenty footmen in scarlet liveries with silver lace, bearing torches with which to light the way and batons with which to clear the streets. The Marshal himself was Mr. Darrel, of Lincoln's Inn, 'an extraordinary handsome proper gentleman' mounted on one of the King's horses and with furnishings 'exceeding rich and glorious,' which matched the gallantry of his horsemanship. He was followed by a hundred gentlemen of the Inns all chosen for their appearance and mounted on the best horses that the noble stables of the town could supply. They were dressed in gold and silver lace, and each was attended by a page bearing his cloak and two lackeys with torches. Their progress was heralded by trumpets. Then followed an anti-Masque of beggars and cripples on horseback who 'had the music of keys and tongs, and the like, snapping and yet playing in a consort before them.' These were mounted 'on the poorest leanest jades that could be gotten out of the dirt-carts, or elsewhere,' and their direction was held to be one of the most ingenious features of the Masque, 'the variety and change from such noble music and gallant horses, that went before them, unto their proper music, and pitiful

horses, making both of them the more pleasing.' Then came a Masque and anti-Masque of birds, represented by little boys suitably attired and clustered round an owl in an ivy bush, all mounted on small horses and attended by footmen with torches. Then after a group of musicians playing northern instruments, such as bagpipes and the rest, came an anti-Masque which must have tested the royal sense of humour. It was named the 'Anti-Masque of the Projectors,' and boldly satirised the practice of granting monopolistic patents. One rider wore a bit on his head, signifying his desire 'that none in the Kingdom might ride their horses, but with such bits as they should buy of him.' Another wore a bunch of carrots on his head and carried a capon on his fist representing himself as 'the first inventor of the art to feed capons fat with carrots, and that none but himself might make use of the invention, and have the privilege for fourteen years according to the statute.' In order that the conscience of the King might not be too closely touched, the management of this anti-Masque was entrusted to Noy, the Attorney-General. Then followed two chariots occupied by gods and goddesses, each drawn by six plumed horses and attended by musicians and torchbearers. Splendid as all this cavalcade had been, it was but a prelude to the magnificence of the four chariots that now followed containing the Grand Masquers themselves. These were 'most curiously framed, carved, and painted with exquisite art,' and each was in the distinctive colours allotted to the respective Inns. Silver and crimson for Gray's Inn, silver and blue for the Middle Temple, the colours for Lincoln's Inn

and the Inner Temple not being specified. Each chariot containing four Masquers was painted, body, poles and wheels, in its chosen colours and drawn by four horses covered in corresponding cloth of tissue, and plumed on their heads and buttocks, and the scheme was carried out in 'the coachman's cap and feather, his long coat and his very whip and cushion.' The Masquers, the handsomest members of their Inns, were thickly spangled in silver, and wore white silk stockings up to their trunk hose, with sprigs in their caps. All the Inns wore the same costumes, distinguished only by their colours. Each chariot was escorted by footmen liveried in keeping with the Masquers, 'carrying huge flamboys in their hands, which with the torches, gave such a lustre to the paintings, spangles, and habits, that hardly anything could be invented to appear more glorious.' The light of the procession shone on the windows as it passed slowly along the streets, and, says the chronicler, the winter night fell upon a scene as bright as noon.

As the Masque approached Whitehall the banqueting house was filling up with the lords and ladies of the Court, intent on rivalling the magnificence of the spectacle in their own costumes. The King and Queen, entering the hall, could hardly move through the throng to take their places at the windows from which they were to witness the arrival of the pageant. As the procession came down Whitehall, their Majesties were so 'delighted with the noble bravery of it, that they sent to the Marshal to desire that the whole show might fetch a turn about the Tilt-yard, that they might have a double view of them.' When this had been done the horsemen

dismounted and entered the Palace, while the King and his Court took their places, a special gallery behind the throne being reserved for the gentlemen of the Inns of Court who were not taking part in the performance. Then on the stage within the banqueting hall was enacted the Masque itself, poetry, music and dancing conspiring to an entertainment that was embellished with all the resources of a scenic art that had reached a high pitch of excellence under the influence of Inigo Jones. The set design over, the night went on with improvised revels, the Queen leading the dance with Masquers of her choice, and the ladies of the Court following her example. Towards morning the King and Queen retired and the Masquers sat down to a banquet, not returning to their homes until daylight again was breaking on the city.

So greatly was the Queen taken with the display, that she desired to see it repeated, and this accordingly was done in the Merchant Taylors' Hall at the invitation of the Lord Mayor of London. Again there was a great procession through the city, and again the Court attended in state. This time many of the citizens were privileged to see the entertainment, greatly to their content, 'especially those of the younger sort, and of the female sex.' The occasion was one to the great honour of the Lord Mayor, and also of great expense. 'The persons employed in the Masque,' says Whitelock, 'were paid justly, and liberally; some of the music had one hundred pounds apiece, so that the whole charge of the music came to about a thousand pounds.' Many of the costumes cost a hundred pounds each, and when the

total reckoning was made the Inns of Court and the Lord Mayor between them had spent a sum amounting to considerably over a hundred thousand pounds. Shortly after the event a deputation from the committee waited upon the King and Queen to thank their Majesties for so graciously receiving the entertainment. There was a pretty exchange of compliments, and Charles assured them of his benevolent intentions towards them all. The Queen added that she had never seen a nobler Masque, nor one better performed, and upon these civilities being reported to the Inns a special vote of thanks was passed to the committee for the pains that they had taken to achieve what on all hands was allowed to be a brilliant success. And thus, concludes Whitelock, 'these dreams passed, these pomps vanished.'

He reminds himself that it is 'Now time to return to the public story of the latter part of this year,' and proceeds to tell how Laud procured 'a sharp sentence against Prynne in the Star Chamber, by which that unhappy bigot was to be imprisoned for life, fined five thousand pounds, expelled from Lincoln's Inn and disbarred, deprived of his University degree, set in the pillory, and have his ears cut off, while his book was burnt by the common hangman.' About the same time Dr. Bastwick, in spite of an express declaration in his book *Flagellum Episcoporum Latialium* that he intended nothing against the English bishops, but only against those of Rome, also fell under Laud's displeasure in the Star Chamber; while strangely enough a book by one Chowney, defending popish religion, was dedicated to Laud and openly patronised by him. The Archbishop of Canterbury even went

so far as to maintain that 'the Romish Church was a true Church and erred not in fundamentals.' The theological niceties of the situation do not concern us, but such a circumstance could not but inflame the suspicions with which Laud was already widely regarded in the country. A Roman Catholic queen in England was bad enough, but an Archbishop of Canterbury who did not conceal his sympathy for a church deeply mistrusted on account of its political history was a public menace altogether too serious to be regarded patiently. That the suspicions were not without foundation is made abundantly clear by an entry in Laud's diary dated August 17th, 1633: 'Saturday I had a serious offer made me again to be a Cardinal; I was then from Court, but so soon as I came thither I acquainted his Majesty with it; but my answer again was, that somewhat dwelt within me, which would not suffer that, till Rome were other than it is.'

## IV

Hampden himself was a gentleman of the Inner Temple, but the masqueing of the Inns at Whitehall did not call him from his retirement in Buckinghamshire. He would, indeed, have been an unwelcome, if not a forbidden guest. The growing complacency of a Court that daily seemed to be more securely established in absolute power would hardly have extended to a man who throughout had been uncompromising in his opposition to the methods by which it ruled. Hampden, although he had escaped the miserable fate of Eliot, was a marked if a free



man. His mind, always moderate in temper, was not readily flexible, and where a Wentworth or a Selden might see means of accommodation, he could see none. The Court in 1633, the date of the great Whitehall Masque, was wilfully blind to the danger that was brewing in the country, but if now and again Charles or Wentworth or Laud gave a stray thought to the challenge with which one day they might be met, Hampden would be foremost among those whom they would know to be irreconcilable. He had made no great reputation in the House as a speaker, but before the last Parliament had been dismissed he had acquired an authority second to none in his party. It was in his firm moderation that the secret of his strength lay. Any kind of oratorical effect would have been disdained by a mind that was intent only on applying deeply-rooted principles to the daily conduct of the national life. This was a strength of character that rose above the caprices of political fashion. It cared nothing for party considerations in its desire for the common good.

Hampden, in fact, was not at heart a politician at all. If he had been born in an age of responsible government nothing would have pleased him better than to exercise his influence as a landed squire in the seclusion of a county, and leave the direction of the country's affairs in other hands. But it was precisely this disinterested kind of nature that was most profoundly stirred to action by the political corruption of Charles and his ministers. The Puritan Revolution was led not by politicians who saw a chance and took it, but by men who after long reluctance obeyed a national call that could no

longer be unheeded. Oliver Cromwell, with a far more restless spirit than Hampden's, was a middle-aged farmer when at last he decided after years of provocation that some action must be taken. When Hampden retired to his estates at the time of Wentworth's promotion to power, there is little doubt that if the new ministry had stood for enlightenment and the correction of abuses in the prerogative, he would have been content to let the Parliamentary rights of the people stand in abeyance so long as the improvement was maintained. The improvement, however, did not even begin. The old malpractices were not reformed ; they were merely reorganised by a stronger will. And so Hampden, and men like him throughout the country, far from leaving things with confidence to Whitehall, fretted against the time when circumstances would give them their opening once again.

The determination grew more dangerous with delay. The Court, so graciously entertained by the Candlemas festivities, so affably inclined towards the loyal expressions of the learned Inns, heard nothing, and was anxious to hear nothing, of the heavily charged undertones that would have introduced ominous discords into the harmonies of Mr. White-lock's forty lutes. Although the attempt made by the Crown to dispense with Parliament altogether in the years following must have seemed at the time to be a fatal blow against what was now known as the Country Party, it was in fact the most stimulating thing that could have befallen the popular cause. So long as the spirits of reform were at Westminster they might be a constant cause of disturbance to the

King and to his ministers, but the direct contact, tempestuous though it was, was in itself in some measure a liberating agency. It was when these men, dismissed to contemplate their grievances in retirement, found that as year followed year they were still excluded from taking any part in the government that was more and more confirmed in its excesses, that the revolution really began to germinate. The parliamentary opposition to the King that was brought to a period in 1629, had no design against the monarchy as such. It was intent only on keeping the monarchy in order by ever vigilant protest. Even during the years of exile from Westminster, it is unlikely that the actual overthrow of the throne was seriously contemplated by the Puritans. But during that time a determination grew that sooner or later the throne should bend itself to the popular demands on terms dictated by the people. It is possible that even then many minds did not shrink from the contingency that in the process the King would be destroyed. Charles's ten-year experiment in unregulated government was indefensible constitutionally, but beyond that it was a disastrous blunder in political tactics. Had he kept the Commons at Westminster he would certainly have had to compromise with them. In refusing to concede so much, or so little, he drove the revolt into a corner and made his own tragedy inevitable.

At Great Tew, in Oxfordshire, Hampden had a neighbourly acquaintance with a man whose temper and character were closely in sympathy with his own. Lucius Cary, second Viscount Falkland, born in 1610, had retired as a young man to his family estate in

that village, with a mind devoted to learning and the liberal arts. He had influential associations at Court, and after many public vicissitudes he was at length to fall, a hero of the Royalist cause, at the Battle of Newbury in 1643. In the meantime he had supported the Attainder of Strafford, and had opposed Laud's ecclesiastical policy while standing for the episcopacy. That is to say, he was a man of moderate courses, opposing much for which the King stood, though giving his life for the King in the end. The appeal of such a one to Hampden's own well-disciplined generosity was assured from the first, and the influence of the older man on his young friend is recorded by Clarendon in the little memoir of Falkland which is one of the most beautiful passages in the *History of the Rebellion*. There we are told that when the revolutionary issue was coming to a crisis Falkland, deeply involved as he was in Royalist sympathies, was long kept in the political centre by his confidence in his Puritan friend. 'The great opinion he held of the uprightness and integrity of those persons who appeared most active, especially of Mr. Hampden, kept him longer from suspecting any design against the peace of the Kingdom; and though he differed commonly from them in conclusions, he believed long their purposes were honest.' It was at Tew House that Falkland formed many of the associations that were to have this moderating influence upon his conduct. 'The most polite and accurate men' from the University of Oxford, Clarendon tells us, were so attracted by the wit and judgment of the young man's learning and the grace of his manners 'that they frequently resorted and dwelt with him, as in a

College situated in a purer air ; so that his house was a university bound in a lesser volume.' Among the honoured guests at Tew were frequently to be found the more liberal churchmen of the day, men who heartily disliked Laud and his ecclesiastical ways. Such were George Morley, afterwards Bishop of Winchester, who on being asked what the Arminians, or Church Absolutists, held, replied that they held all the best Bishoprics and Deaneries in England, and John Hales, the ever memorable, who although he became Canon of Windsor, scandalised orthodoxy by announcing that he would leave the Church of England to-morrow 'if it obliged him to believe that any other Christians should be damned ; and that nobody would conclude another man to be damned who did not wish him so.' Belonging to the same circle were Arthur Goodwin, who had been with Hampden at Magdalen and the Inner Temple, and was to sit with him for Buckinghamshire in the Long Parliament, and Hampden himself. The fortunes of the Civil War were to divide these friends in mortal opposition, but the life at Tew House is an image of the cultivated decency that was to be drawn into that tragic ordeal. Morley, surviving his early enthusiasms, lived to be banished by the Commonwealth, and preached the Restoration sermon to Charles II. Hales, likewise swept away by the Puritan storm, did not live to see it subside. Falkland died a Cavalier at Newbury, and Hampden a Roundhead at Chalgrove Field, where Arthur Goodwin, as Commander-in-Chief of the Parliamentary troops in Buckinghamshire, also fell.

In 1634, Elizabeth, Hampden's wife, died. They

had been married fifteen years, and she left him nine children, three sons and six daughters. In Great Hampden church her husband erected a memorial, on the black stone of which is inscribed an epitaph, which while it may seem a little ornate to our modern taste has a spacious civility about it which is characteristic of the time and worth recording.

To the Eternall Memory  
Of the truely virtuous and pious

ELIZABETH HAMPDEN

wife of John Hampden, of Great Hampden, Esquire.

Sole daughter and Heire of Edmund Symeon

Of Pyrton, in the County of Oxon, Esquire.

The tender Mother of a happy Offspring

In 9 hopefull Children.

In her pilgrimage,

The staie and comfort of her neighbours,

The love and glory of a well-ordered family,

The delight and happines of tender parents,

But a crown of Blessings to a husband,

In a wife, to all an eternall paterne of goodnes

And cause of love, while she was

In her dissolution

A losse invaluable to each,

Yet herselfe blest, and they fully recompenced

In her translation, from a Tabernacle of Claye

And Fellowship with Mortalls, to a celestiall Mansion

And communion with a Deity.

20 Day of August 1634.

John Hampden, her sorrowful Husband,

In perpetuall testimony of his conjugal Love,

Hath dedicated this Monument.

Of these children, Elizabeth, the eldest, married Richard Knightley, of Fawsley Court in Northamptonshire, an enthusiastic young parliamentarian, who was to take an active part in the affairs of the Commonwealth, and ultimately to assist George Monk and Edward Montagu in restoring the Stuarts to the English throne. The second daughter, Anne, married Robert Pye, of Farringdon in Berkshire, who was also to serve the Puritan cause at Westminster and in the field. He was further to be a progenitor of that Henry James Pye, of whom the *Dictionary of National Biography* says with unwonted irony that he was 'poetaster and poet laureate.' Richard and Robert were both men of good families, and by the marriages Hampden formed further influential connections in the midland counties, on the borders of which was his cousin Cromwell, at Huntingdon, while another cousin, Edmund Waller, a poet and patriot of variable moods, who nevertheless has 'Go, lovely Rose' to his eternal credit, lived at Beaconsfield in Buckinghamshire.

Thus, at the age of forty, Hampden found himself a widower, with a large family of young children, the master of a great estate which enabled him to support his household with distinction, the most substantial person in his neighbourhood, connected with several families of good standing, and on the whole, perhaps, the most generally respected, since he was the most reasonable, leader of the party in whose name he was about to take decisive action. This man, so studiously moderate in his mind, was now faced by an emergency in which moderation was no longer possible. The manner in which he met it

brought new confidence to the advocates of freedom in England, and made his name in history. In the early part of the year 1634 the Attorney-General, Noy, advised the King in council that he might lawfully replenish his exchequer by the imposition of Ship-money. On August 9th, Noy died at Brentford of the stone, but the design of his invention went forward, and on October 20th the first writ for Ship-money was issued, with entirely unforeseen consequences.



## CHAPTER III

### HAMPDEN AND SHIP-MONEY

#### I

THE great controversy regarding Ship-money extended over a considerable period of time. It began with the issue of the first writ in October, 1634, and was not concluded, if indeed it can be said to have been concluded then, until a majority verdict of the judges was delivered against John Hampden in 1638. It was during these proceedings that Hampden became known throughout the country as the champion of English liberty, and with entirely unostentatious firmness compelled all parties alike to recognise the realities of the situation. It is fitting, therefore, that an account of the dispute should be given in some detail.

The first writ dated by the King from Westminster on the 20th October, 1634, was addressed 'To the Mayor, Commonalty, and Citizens of our City of London, and to the Sheriffs of the same City, and good Men in the said City, and in the Liberties, and Members of the same,' and proclaims that whereas the English coasts were infested by 'Thieves, Pirates and Robbers of the Sea, as well as Turks, enemies of the Christian Name,' and that whereas the country's merchandise was in constant peril of these, suffering great loss of good men who were taken into captivity,

proper steps must forthwith be taken for the defence of the Kingdom at sea. It then lays down the general principle that the cost of such defence should be borne by all citizens of the country, but adds plausibly that as the dangers are the most imminent to the dwellers on the sea coasts to whom also accrues the greater share of the profits from sea trading, the Port of London should set the first example, and orders the City to deliver at Portsmouth, within four months, one ship of war of nine hundred tons with three hundred and fifty men ; one of eight hundred tons with two hundred and fifty men ; four of five hundred tons, with two hundred men each ; and one of three hundred tons with a hundred and fifty men. All ships are to be fully supplied, armed and victualled, and for twenty-six weeks from the date of delivery the City is to be responsible for the men's food and wages, and for general upkeep. The Mayor and Aldermen of the City are empowered to assess the citizens according to their means, and to appoint collectors for gathering in the levy. Further provision is made for the punishment of defaulters by imprisonment or otherwise. In a concluding clause, which it must be supposed can hardly have been wholly unconscious in its irony, it is ordained that if more money should be paid in than is sufficient for the shipping specified, the excess shall be returned to the contributors.

The writ having been delivered to the Lord Mayor, Sir Robert Parkhurst, it was communicated by him to the Common Council in the Guildhall on the second day in December, 1634. The Court on the same day drafted a Petition that was sent to the King submitting that by Ancient Privileges, Grants and Acts of

Parliament, they were exempt from such a levy, and humbly begged to be excused from its payment. No notice was taken of the protest, and the collection of Ship-money was ordered to proceed. Richard Chambers, the city merchant who had already distinguished himself by refusing to contribute to a forced loan, again resisted the collectors. When formerly the draft of a Petition craving the royal pardon had been submitted to him for signature, he had written on the document : ‘ All the abovesaid contents and submission I, Richard Chambers, do utterly abhor and detest, as most unjust and false ; and never till death will acknowledge any part thereof.’ Now he was no less resolute, and was committed to prison. He brought a suit against the judge for false imprisonment, and failed, it being ruled that the question of the legality of Ship-money might not even be argued by Chambers’s counsel. In spite of the City Council’s protest, however, and individual obstructors such as Chambers, the new writ soon began to show substantial returns, and was quickly followed by others which were at first directed only to the coast towns. In spite of all the difficulties of collection, Ship-money yielded in the first year of its levy over £200,000 to the revenue. Encouraged by these results, the King and his advisers had already begun to turn their attentions inland, and by the end of 1635, the application of the levy was general throughout the counties. As the inland towns clearly had no means of building ships themselves, the levy so far as they were concerned was specifically a money tax. With this expansion of the scheme discontent became steadily articulate.

In theory it may very well be argued that there was a good deal to be said for the contention that the interests of the inland towns were as closely involved in the integrity of the English seaboard as were those of the coast. Inland inhabitants clearly benefited by the trade of the ports, even although the enjoyment was less directly apparent. If Ship-money had been a legitimate tax voted by Parliament, there would have been few citizens to complain against its equal distribution over the country, but since it was in fact an illegal levy made by the King without parliamentary consent, the only convincing argument that could be employed in its favour was an immediate and obvious advantage to the payer. Such an argument might be employed in places where the inhabitants had an opportunity of seeing for themselves the kind of menace against which they were to be protected. Such people well might say that the levy was irregular, but that it was worth paying as an insurance against plainly manifest dangers. To the inland burgess, having no such experience, the argument of expediency would fall flat, and all that would be evident to his mind would be the irregularity of the impost. This circumstance was greatly aggravated by the fact that in the institution of Ship-money the King was for the first time attempting to regularise irregular taxation. The Court practice of raising money by forced loans, which sometimes were ingenuously called Benevolences, though offensive in principle, imposed burdens that in reality fell only on the few. A man needed to be very energetic in opposition to make a public fuss about an imposition that might not recur, or, if it did, was as

likely as not to miss him and light upon his neighbour. Ship-money was quite another matter. It was proposed not as a casual but as an annual levy, and the only people who were excluded from its assessment were the poor cottagers who could show that by their daily toil they could do no more than keep body and soul together. Such exemptions were at the discretion of the tax-collector, frequently with very unsatisfactory results. It may be conceded that the Ship-money scheme was more equitable in design than the forced loans that were levied largely by caprice. But it was precisely because of its national basis that it made a far deeper impression on the people's mind than any taxation that had preceded it. Intoxicated with the apparent success of the experiment in arbitrary government, the King was now attempting to enjoy the advantages of what amounted to parliamentary machinery without parliamentary sanction. Had Ship-money been voted by Parliament, the method of its application would have been much the same as that which was now attempted by the King. Charles and his ministers had come to a pass in which they fondly believed that the sovereign word could take the place of a parliamentary vote, and that it could efficiently direct and control the life currents of the nation. The result of this effrontery was inevitable. For the first time the nation at large became fully conscious of what was going on, and the King was at last made to realise that he had gone a step too far.

In the autumn of 1635, less than a year after the first summons to the City of London, a writ was issued in similar terms to Sir Peter Temple, of Stowe,

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as High Sheriff of Buckinghamshire. The requisition was for one ship of war, four hundred and fifty tons burthen, a hundred and eighty men, and fully fitted, provision again to be made for twenty-six weeks' maintenance after the date of delivery. It will be of interest to note the assessments made on all the English shires at the same time in terms of tons, men and money.

	Tons.	Men.	£
Bedfordshire	300	120	3,000
Berkshire	400	160	4,000
Buckinghamshire	450	180	4,500
Cambridgeshire	350	140	5,000
Cheshire	300	120	3,000
Cornwall	550	220	5,500
Cumberland & West-			
morland	140	56	1,400
Derbyshire	350	140	3,500
Devonshire	900	360	9,000
Dorset	500	200	5,000
Durham	200	80	2,000
Essex	800	320	8,000
Gloucestershire	550	220	5,500
Hampshire	600	240	6,000
Herefordshire	350	140	3,500
Hertfordshire	400	160	4,000
Huntingdon	400	80	2,000
Kent	800	320	8,000
Lancashire	400	160	4,000
Leicestershire	450	180	4,500
Lincolnshire	800	320	8,000
London & Middlesex	1,200	480	19,000

# HAMPDEN AND SHIP-MONEY

	Tons.	Men.	£
Monmouth	150	60	1,500
Norfolk	780	310	7,800
Northamptonshire	600	240	6,000
Northumberland	210	84	2,100
Nottinghamshire	350	140	3,500
Oxfordshire	350	140	3,500
Rutland	80	32	800
Shropshire	450	180	4,500
Somersetshire	800	320	8,000
Staffordshire	300	120	3,000
Suffolk	800	520	8,000
Surrey	350	140	3,500
Sussex	500	200	5,000
Warwickshire	400	160	4,000
Wiltshire	700	280	7,000
Worcestershire	350	140	3,500
Yorkshire	600	240	12,000
North Wales	400	160	4,000
South Wales	500	200	5,000

When Sir Peter Temple issued his demand to the County of Buckinghamshire, John Hampden, Esquire, was assessed in the sum of thirty-one shillings and sixpence. In the following January, 1636, Temple having been replaced by a new High Sheriff, he was ordered by the Privy Council to make an immediate satisfaction of arrears that had accumulated in his county, and to furnish his successor with a complete list of defaulters. Temple accordingly ordered the assessors to supply him with the necessary information, and among the returns sent in was a note of dues unpaid in the parish of Kimbell Magna. It included

## HAMPDEN AND SHIP-MONEY

[illegible]

Amos 11. 1. 1633  
we estimate our annual C. 1000000000  
for refusing to pay just portions of money at  
the time of the year by the Lord for the  
the sum of 1000000000

John A. Hendry  
Thomas J. Latta } ~~11~~ 11/11/11

John Gindrich }  
Thomas Rutland } Houghton

List of defaulters on Ship-money rate in the parish of Great Kimbell. John Hampden's name is at the head of the list, his assessment being thirty-one shillings and sixpence.



thirty-one names, and the first of these was that of John Hampden. The amount of his assessment, trifling in itself, was the largest on the list. The insignificance of the sum when measured by Hampden's known wealth added significance to his defiance. His name, moreover, gave heart to everyone in the county, who shared his detestation of the whole business. When the returns were received at Court, Hampden's name was immediately noted, as also was that of Lord Saye and Sele, who was displaying similar obstinacy in Warwickshire. Private representations were of no avail, and in June, the arrears still being in default, Temple received a summons, signed by Laud and Wentworth with others, calling upon him to appear before the Council. Sickness prevented his attendance on the appointed day. He was seized by a royal officer and kept in custody at his own house. While in confinement he wrote to his mother, Lady Hester Temple, in Dorset, that he was to attend the King at Theobalds on the 17th of July to 'give an account to him what I have done in the service, and as he likes my proceedings, I am to continue in the messenger's hand, or be released, or worse.' He has not 'so much time as to do my duty to my dear Parents, nor to send to them. Yet I had hoped that they would have sent for a buck or what Stowe would afford before this time. But seeing they will not, I will spare myself so much time as to present now unto them one by this bearer.' And then, in conclusion, 'Although I am debarred from Father, Mother, Wife, and Children and State, though some of them far absent, with this I present my duty, with these unhappy lines,

and remain Your son that loves and honours my Father and you, Peter Temple.'

The Court was now in a dilemma. Although the returns of Ship-money on the whole were gratifying, it obviously would not do to allow defaulters to defy the royal authority with impunity. It made no serious difference to the exchequer whether Mr. John Hampden paid thirty-one shillings and sixpence or not, but the example of his refusal might have very grave effects on a public which, although it was paying up, was paying with growing and unconcealed reluctance. On the other hand, the arbitrary arrest of a man like Hampden on a default so petty in itself would have been to agitate the whole question too grossly. The legality of the Court's position was by now too delicate a subject to be unnecessarily stressed by any such wanton outrage against the liberty of the subject. The King's Council decided that Hampden must be corrected, but that the correction as a matter of policy must be enforced with as much show of legal authority as possible. The first step was a curious one. Instead of prosecuting Hampden at once in the courts, the King, through the Lord Keeper, addressed an enquiry to 'All the Judges of England,' assembled in the Star Chamber, on the 14th of February, 1637. In a preamble it is stated that whereas certain of his Majesty's subjects have refused to pay their Ship-money, the King is graciously disposed to take the view that the fault is rather one of discretion or even of ignorance than of disloyalty, and that the princely wisdom inclines to the view that a little persuasion may bring the defaulters to

display the same 'cheerfulness and alacrity' as happily distinguishes the general sum of the people in paying. The position of the defaulters, it appears, is that they claim the imposition of Ship-money to be illegal. But the results of such a delusion are likely to be a succession of tedious and oppressive cases in 'our several Courts at Westminster.' The King, in his princely love and affection to his people, is solicitous in the common good to avoid these, and therefore wishes it to be pronounced once and for all by the supreme judicature of the land whether or not Ship-money is lawful. 'We have thought expedient by this our Letter directed to you all to require your judgement in this case, as it is set down in the enclosed paper, which will not only gain time, but also be of more authority to over-rule any prejudicate opinions of others in the point.' The 'enclosed paper' asks whether, when the Kingdom is in danger, the King may not by writ under the Great Seal of England levy Ship-money as and where he thinks proper, and 'whether in such a case is not the King the sole judge both of the danger, and when, and how, the same is to be prevented and avoided.' The twelve judges gave their answer to the full satisfaction of the King. Two of them, George Croke and Richard Hutton, for long held out against the opinion, but were at length persuaded by the majority to sign the judgment on the strange undertaking that it should not be binding on them in any case which they might have to try in the courts.

The King and his ministers were delighted. The Lord Keeper at the King's command assured the

assembled judges that their judgment was 'of singular use and consequence, and for the safety of the whole Kingdom,' that it was 'a thing not fit to be kept in a corner,' and that they had 'great cause to declare it with joy . . . that in so high a point of his sovereignty the King hath been pleased to descend, and to communicate with . . . his judges ; which showeth that justice and sovereignty in his Majesty doth kiss each other.' Wentworth declared the judgment of the Law to be 'the greatest service that profession hath done the Crown in my time,' and made no attempt to conceal the hopes which the event encouraged in his mind. The King now had established his right to make a levy for ships ; why should he not assume the right to make another for a land army, without which 'the Crown seems to me to stand but upon one leg at home, and to be considerable but by halves to foreign princes abroad.' Indeed why should there be any limitations to this happy precedent ? Why should not the Crown derive from it 'Many huge and great advantages, more proper to be thought on some other season than now.' In short, arbitrary government had now reached an ecstasy of intoxication. Nothing was impossible to the future, and in the meantime, in order to drive home the opinion of the judges by making an example of one individual delinquent, the Crown lawyers were ordered to proceed against John Hampden in respect of an unpaid assessment—not the thirty-one shillings and sixpence of Great Kimbell, but a further sum of twenty shillings on his lands in the adjoining parish of Stoke Mandeville. Preparations were made for what was to prove to

be one of the most fateful trials in the history of England.

## II

While these were going forward, public discontent steadily became more articulate. When it was known that Hampden was to be put on trial, responsible opinion throughout the country decided that a test case was coming into court. The farce of the judges' opinion delivered in the Star Chamber might enchant Whitehall, but it deceived nobody else. It was still firmly believed by a great body of intelligent and moderate Englishmen that the King was betraying them, and that in the imposition of Ship-money he was attempting to bar them permanently from the recovery of their rights. The judges might flatter his pretensions in a session that amounted to no more than a private assembly called at the King's caprice ; it remained to be seen whether they would dare to confirm their uncovenanted judgment in the public courts. The issue was awaited with an almost breathless interest. It was as though everyone knew that a capital crisis in the national life was imminent.

The resolution of the men who had followed Hampden's example was stiffened. Also popular petitions reached Whitehall. The substance of one of these will suffice to represent the general tone :

' Most Gracious and Dread Sovereign,

' We your Poor and Loyal Subjects of this your Realm of England, now grieved and oppressed with the late Taxes imposed on us, for setting out of

divers Ships to guard the narrow Seas, without our Common Consent in Parliament thereunto had ; do here in all Humility and Duty prostrate our selves and this our Remonstrance against the said Taxes, at your Highness Feet, beseeching Your Majesty of Your Royal Justice and Clemency, to take the same into Your most Just and Gracious Consideration, and thereupon to release us Your poor Subjects from this Intolerable Burthen and Grievance, under which we groan and languish, and know not how long it may continue.

‘ And here first of all, we most humbly represent to Your most Excellent Majesty, that this Tax of Ship-Money is directly contrary to the Fundamental Laws and Liberties of this Your Realm of England, which Your Majesty, both in point of Justice and Honour is obliged inviolably to preserve, according to the Oath made to God and Your Subjects at Your Coronation, and Your frequent Printed Royal Protestations since, both in Your Answer to the Petition in the third year of Your Highness Reign, in Your Royal Speech in Parliament, Printed therewith by Your Command, and in Your Declaration to all Your Loving Subjects of the Causes, which moved Your Majesty to dissolve the last Parliament, published by Your Special Command.

‘ Likewise page 23, 42, 43, 44, in all which Your Majesty (to all Your Subjects Comforts) hath made these several Declarations of Your Royal Pleasure, in these most Gracious Words.

‘ “ The King willeth that Right be done according to the Laws and Customs of the Realm, and that the Statutes (recited in the Petition of Right) be put

in Execution, that his Subjects may have no cause to complain of any Wrong or Oppression contrary to their Just Rights and Liberties (to the preservation whereof he holds himself in Conscience as well obliged as of His Prerogative) let right be done as is desired ; and I assure you my Maxime is that the Peoples Liberties strengthen the King's Prerogative, and the King's Prerogative is to defend the Peoples Liberties. I do here declare, that those things which have been done whereby men had some cause to suspect the Liberty of the Subject to be trencht upon, shall not hereafter be drawn into example for your prejudice ; and in time to come (in the Word of a King) you shall not have the like cause to complain. We are not unmindful of the preservation of the Just and Ancient Liberties of Our Subjects, which We secured them by Our Gracious Answers to the Petition of Right in Parliament, having not since done any Act whereby to Infringe them. But Our Care is, and hereafter shall be, to keep them entire and inviolable, as We would do Our own Right and Sovereignty. We do also declare, that We maintain the Ancient and Just Rights and Liberties of Our Subjects, with so much constancy and justice, that they shall have cause to acknowledge, that under Our Government and Gracious Protection they live in a more happy and free Estate, than any Subjects in the Christian World."

' If then we shall make it appear to Your Majesty, that this tax is against the Laws of this Your Realm, and the just ancient Rights and Liberties of Your Subjects, we doubt not, but Your Majesty out of Your Royal Justice and Goodness will be most

Graciously pleased to exonerate us thereof, and never to draw it into Example more.

‘That it is against the Fundamental-Laws, Just-Rights, and Ancient Liberties of Your People, we shall make it appear by these particulars.’

Having thus skilfully convicted the King out of his own mouth, the petitioners proceed to particular instances. Magna Charta and the Petition of Right are cited as enacting that no freeman shall be imprisoned or his goods seized but by judgment of the law, whereas many have so suffered under the Ship-money writs. Several statutes of earlier reigns are specified as making no taxation legal that is not levied by consent of Parliament, whereas Ship-money plainly has no such consent. Further, it is shown that it has been the invariable practice of earlier reigns when money was needed for the defence of the realm for the Crown to apply to the country for it by method stipulated in law and custom, and that the royal prerogative has never been admitted as a sufficient agency in itself. The precedents, pleaded by the Crown, of Ship-money raised in the times of Hardicanute and John are dismissed, the former as being the insufferable imposition not of a hereditary prince but of a ‘foreign Danish tyrant . . . who died amidst his cups,’ the latter as differing wholly in its terms and application from the present levy, and both as belonging to times before the advent of Magna Charta.

While protests of this nature were being made, the judges were carrying the King’s good news from the Star Chamber to the Assize Courts up and



down the country. One of them at York, in the Lent Term of 1637, informed the Grand Jury that it was 'a lawful and inseparable Flower of the Crown, for the King to command not only the maritime counties, but also those that are inland, to find ships for the defence of the Kingdom,' adding 'that it was not his single judgment but the judgment of all his brethren, witnessed by their subscriptions.' His Lordship then referred to the rumour that Mr. Justice Hutton and Mr. Justice Croke had concurred against their own persuasion, and wished that 'his hand might rot from his arm that was guilty of any such crime.' In order to give a perfect cachet to the argument, he finally observed that 'in some cases the judges were above an act of Parliament.'

The writ against Hampden was issued in March, 1637, but the case did not come up for trial until the Michaelmas Term of the same year. In the meantime, the Archbishop of Canterbury made the following entries in his diary :

'June 14. This day John Bastwick, Doctor of Physic, Henry Burton, Batchelor of Divinity, and William Prynne, Barrister at Law, were censured for their libels against the hierarchy of the Church.

'June 26. The speech I then spake in the Star Chamber was commanded by the King to be printed ; and it came out June 25.

'June 30. Friday, the above-mentioned three Libellers lost their ears.'

Rushworth elaborates the last of these entries thus :

'June 30. The above-named defendants lost their

ears, the hangman rather sawing off the remainder of Prynne's ears, than cutting them off.'

In the Archbishop's speech, made to the court when sentence had been pronounced, maintaining first that his calling as a bishop is '*Jure Divino*, by Divine Right,' he answers the charge of Popish practices which had been brought against him by the prisoners at the bar, and after a portentous exhibition of theological mumbo-jumbo he concludes: 'I humbly crave pardon of your Lordships for this my necessary length, and give you hearty thanks for the noble patience and your just and honourable Censure upon these men, and for your unanimous dislike of them and defence of the Church, but because the business hath some reflection upon myself, I shall forbear to censure them, but leave them to God's mercy and the King's justice.' To make an end of the story in which the first spiritual lord of the land took so energetic a part, the three mutilated convicts were 'afterwards removed to remote islands, where they were kept close prisoners; the wives of Bastwick and Burton, not being allowed after many petitions to have access unto them; nor to set footing in the island; neither was any friend permitted to have access to Mr. Prynne.' Laud in his address had somewhat unnecessarily reminded the court that by the Imperial laws the punishment for such offences as those of which these men stood convicted had been capital.

The civil crisis that was about to be precipitated in England by the controversy on Ship-money was reflected in an ecclesiastical crisis in Scotland, where

the revolt against the episcopacy was daily becoming more active. Throughout the summer there had been a heated correspondence between Canterbury and Edinburgh, chiefly concerning the form of divine service, and there had been scenes of violence in the Scotch capital. As autumn came on, however, Rushworth in an idyllic passage tells us that 'All business now for a time seemed to be hushed and calmed, by reason of the long vacation and the harvest which drew all sorts of people from Edinburgh, except the Citizens; so that little or nothing was done between the last of July and first of October, save that some Ministers petitioned the Lords of the Council for suspending the Letter whereby they were charged to receive the service-book.' Harvest home, however, Edinburgh was full again, and in tumult. Royal proclamations were issued for keeping the peace, official business was adjourned from Edinburgh to Linlithgow, and a seditious book against ecclesiastical government was burnt. These measures were ineffective, and it was from this time that the Scots virtually became allies of the Parliamentary party against the Court. In England too, the general unrest had been mounting throughout the year. Many substantial men, sick of the whole business, sailed or designed to sail to the new world in search of political freedom, but in April, 1637, the King issued an embargo against all such emigration, under the pretence that the only purpose of the fugitives was 'to live without the reach of authority.' In June, John Williams, Bishop of Lincoln, was brought before the Star Chamber on two charges of betraying state secrets and the suborning of perjury, and sentenced

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to a fine of £10,000, imprisonment, and the loss of all his dignities. Williams appears not to have been a very admirable character, nor do the charges against him seem to have been altogether groundless, but it was at least to his credit that in an old antagonism he had opposed Laud's autocracy, and in the speech that on this occasion the Archbishop delivered to the Star Chamber, turgid as usual in its instances, he pressed the case heavily against his fallen rival. Dr. Prothero is probably just in calling Williams 'statesmanlike and astute but somewhat slippery,' but whatever the rights and wrongs of the quarrel may have been Whitelock no doubt gave a faithful record of popular feeling at the time, in his note that 'these proceedings in the Star Chamber against these persons . . . raised deep distaste in the hearts of many people, which some expressed by their murmurings, and gave out Canterbury to be the author of them, more particularly against Lincoln upon the private grudges and emulation between these two prelates.'

Thus many events were conspiring to stiffen popular sentiment in support of Hampden as during the late summer of 1637, after the issue of the writ against him, he awaited his trial. At that time in London too, in spite of distressing interludes provoked by the operations of the Star Chamber, all business for a time may have 'seemed to be hushed and calmed' as the Court took refuge from the threatened visitation of the plague in the more wholesome climates of Windsor and Hampton Court. But the lull was of brief duration. By November the capital was in full activity again, and on the sixth of the month Hampden appeared in the Exchequer Chamber to answer the

charge against him before the full Bench of High Court Judges. Their names were :

John Bramston	} <i>Chief Justices</i>	
John Finch		
Humphrey Davenport		Thomas Trevor
John Denham		George Vernon
Richard Hutton		Francis Crawley
William Jones		Robert Berkeley
George Croke		Richard Weston

Hampden's leading Counsel was Oliver St. John, who in his fortieth year had made a respectable but not conspicuous place in his profession. He had long been on terms of intimate friendship with Hampden, with whom through the Cromwells he had family connections. With him for Hampden was Robert Holborne, like himself a Bencher of Lincoln's Inn. The Crown case was in the hands of Sir John Bankes, the Attorney-General, who was then in his forty-ninth year, and Sir Edward Littleton, Solicitor-General, of the same age, who had a few years before, in the days of his earlier independence, been one of the promoters of the Petition of Right.

### III

The Crown case having been opened, St. John was called upon to show why his client should not pay the sum of twenty shillings, being the assessment on which he was brought to trial, and, failing that, why he should not come under the censure of the court for default. St. John spoke for two days, at the end of which he had risen from obscurity to a position of the highest eminence in advocacy. The main points of his case

were covered with an immense range of precedent and legal learning, and although at intervals he enlivened his argument with flashes of shrewd commonsense, he never for a moment allowed the dramatic elements of the situation to tempt him from a strictly temperate tone. In the preparation of his case he had been in close consultation with Hampden himself, whose clear head and legal knowledge enabled him to take as comprehensive a view as any of the situation. Whitelock in his *Memorials* says : 'Mr. John Hampden, my countryman and kinsman, a gentleman of an ancient family in Buckinghamshire, and of great estates and parts, denied the payment of Ship-money as an illegal tax. He often advised in this great business with Holborne, St. John, myself and others of his friends and counsel.' But full credit must be given to St. John for the masterly presentation of his case in court. The manner could not have been better suited to the occasion. The profession of law was in that age distinguished by a high standard of learning, and although the judges might be too readily amenable to the influences of the Court, nothing else was likely to carry so much weight with them as well-grounded legal argument. St. John, in embellishing this with a spice of worldly wisdom and liberal philosophy, was appealing particularly to the minds of those judges who had hesitated in putting their names to the earlier Star Chamber judgment. A careful examination of his speech as reported verbatim by Rushworth, reveals no point in which he failed in the management of his material. Setting aside the legal arguments to which he gave the greater part of his time, we may present a summary of his pleading.

He began by making three concessions : First, that it was the duty of the country to defend itself against foreign enemies ; secondly, that all men according to their means should be responsible for the performance of this duty ; and thirdly, that the King was the person by law entrusted with the care of this defence. It followed that his client did not claim exemption from his share in this common liability, and further that he subjected himself to the King in its fulfilment. ‘ My Lords,’ said St. John, in one of his rare figures of speech, ‘ by the law the King is *Pater Familiæ*, who by the law of economics is not only to keep peace at home, but to protect his wife and children, and whole families from injuries from abroad.’ He went further, and allowed that the King only had power to make war and peace, and that the law had put the means of defence wholly in his hands. No subject had the power to commit any act of war without the King’s commission save in the emergency of self-defence in a sudden attack, nor to collect any money for such purposes without the King’s warrant. He concluded this clause in his argument with ‘ My Lords, not to burn daylight longer, it must needs be granted, that in this business of defence, the *Suprema Potestas* is inherent in his Majesty, as part of his Crown and Kingly Dignity.’ St. John then advanced to a yet more significant admission, namely that in given circumstances the law of England gave the King power to raise Ship-money from the counties by writ under the Great Seal, but he then moved at once to what in his submission was the crucial question that the law had to decide, which was not whether Ship-money writs could in any case be issued, but whether



the particular writ under which his client was charged had been issued in conformity with the law of England.

In the King, he went on to say, there was vested a two-fold power, the one operating through his private counsels, the other under the jurisdiction of the Law Courts. The King, in other words, was the fountain of bounty and the fountain of justice, but, added St. John, in neither of these functions could he act on his sole prerogative. As to bounty, for example, no grant of lands from the King was valid except by Letters Patent, and moreover Letters Patent drawn in terms prescribed by the law. Similarly, in the matter of justice, while it admittedly flowed from the fountain head which was the King, 'Yet it must run in certain and known channels,' that was to say, through the Assize and other courts. From this admirably arranged argument, St. John made a brilliant development, asserting that of these courts, by which alone the King could dispense justice in the realm, the most important, as it was the most extensive in its powers, was Parliament. Here again the court owed its being to the King. 'It is his Majesty that gives life and being to that, for he only summons, continues, and dissolves it, and he by his *Le-volt* enlivens all the actions of it.' Parliament, in fact, was, with a special significance, the King's Court. And in much of the business of the country the King could not without its assistance 'communicate either his justice or power unto his subjects.' He cited the declaration of Henry VIII, in which the King had said, 'Further we be informed by our judges, that we at no time stand so highly in our Estate Royal as in time of Parliament,

wherein we as Head, and you as Members are conjoined and knit together into one body politic.'

Having thus established the function of Parliament in the State, St. John turned to the examination of the writ before him. In this, he submitted, was an encroachment upon the property of the subject, that is to say, it had been issued without Parliament's consent, and he asked whether in any circumstances this could be held as lawful. He submitted that the only conceivable circumstance of this nature would be when in a time of national emergency the King had exhausted all other means of supply for the defence of the Kingdom, and he submitted further that there was nothing in the writ to show either that there was any national emergency at all or that the ordinary resources at the King's disposal for national defence had been exhausted or even in any measure employed for their proper purpose. He then at great length explained to the court what the nature of these resources was under the constitutional law of the country. There were the services due by tenure of land, both in person and by money payment, and the revenue realisable on certain property which although held by freemen was not freehold. Further, the law allowed the King at his discretion to apply to the defence of the realm all fines paid into the courts, the estates of outlaws, certain ecclesiastical revenues, with other aids and subsidies, with tonnage and poundage, and he could also call upon the services of the Cinque Ports. St. John gave many instances of the legal employment by the King of such funds for defence in times of national emergency, as when the Kingdom was 'in point to be lost by the enemies of Spain and

France,' in the time of Richard II—enemies who 'intended to blot out the name of the English from under the Heaven.' He showed that from early times by these statutory means 'the Kings might always have in readiness a stock of money in their hands to withstand an invasion,' and added that the same facilities were still at the royal disposal, his present Majesty having specifically declared, in his Proclamation dismissing Parliament in 1626, that he reserved to himself these very rights 'for guarding of the seas and the defence of the realm.' In short, the purpose for which the Ship-money writs were designed was already provided for in other and lawful ways, and the emergency by which alone the writs could be justified could not, therefore, in any way be shown to have arisen.

St. John's case as it now stood before the court was that the present Ship-money levy could have been legalised only in one of two ways. Either it must be shown that under a foreign menace the King was in extremity, or it must be shown that the levies had parliamentary consent. The challenge, built up on patient argument, was made without any flourish of rhetoric, but it was one which the Crown would find uncommonly difficult effectively to answer.

St. John proceeded by saying that nothing in the writ showed that the available funds had been exhausted; he was careful to add, 'My Lords, I desire to be understood, I do not affirm that none was expended; only this appears not to your Lordships and the court.' He then made a very pretty point. All that could be learnt from the writ was that the Buckinghamshire ship was to be at Portsmouth on a

given day, but 'by this it appears not to the court, that though the Ships are the King's, that they are to be set forth at the King's charge, for the charge may be borne by the subject for [aught] appears.' The argument was not as fine spun as it may appear at first sight, and it had a special application in the instance before the court. Buckinghamshire could not build a ship. It must therefore buy one. It therefore belonged to Buckinghamshire, and the King was appropriating it without legal authority. This clearly was anything but being a distinction without a difference. Had the King by legal means raised taxes in Buckinghamshire to build a ship, he would have been within his rights. He was, in St. John's submission not within his rights in forcing Buckinghamshire to build a ship with what was still its own money, and taking it from the contributors without their consent.

Still further to fortify his argument, St. John pointed out that if the King in extremity was at any time in doubt as to whether he might legally employ any given funds, the remedy was always in his own hands, since he could at any time call Parliament to settle the question. This, in the present condition of government in England, was daring, but it was too obvious a truth to be ignored. It was indeed inconceivable to any mind not demoralised by the idea of arbitrary power that the King in such an emergency should ever fail to avail himself of the security in his actions that Parliament could afford. St. John called attention to the consistency with which Parliament had in fact given the King exceptional powers on exceptional occasions, and the experience of history

showed that no king need fear the presentation of a good case to his people through Westminster. What motive could his present Majesty have in neglecting this constitutional method in favour of the irregular appropriations by the Ship-money writs? 'It is rare in a subject,' said St. John in a telling phrase, 'and more in a prince, to ask and take that of gift, which he may and ought to have of right.'

He was able further to cite instances when the King, raising money from his subjects for defence of the realm without parliamentary consent, had acknowledged the irregularity by promising repayment, and showed that in such circumstances judgment had been given in the courts against the Crown for restitution. In one of the rare moments when St. John allowed himself a little rhetorical licence, he came to the heart of the matter thus: 'My Lords, to apply all to the thing in question, [if] there is a cause of raising money for the defence of the realm . . . what will serve the turn if his Majesty, as in the writ, may without Parliament levy twenty shillings upon the plaintiff's goods; I shall humbly submit it, by the same reason of law it might have been twenty pounds, and so *in infinitum*, whereby it could come to pass, that if the subject hath anything at all left him, he is not beholding to the law for it, but it is left entirely to the goodness and mercy of the King.'

The particular writ upon which Hampden was being sued was dated August 4th, the ship to be delivered at Portsmouth on the 1st of March following. With a pertinent observation that his Majesty could hardly plead national emergency on account of dangers against which he proposed to provide in

seven months' time, St. John closed his first day's argument.

On the second day he confined himself almost entirely to showing that the arguments which he had advanced concerning the defence of the realm in general, could be applied in particular to the question of defence at sea, and consequently to the provisions of the Ship-money writs. Hour after hour he continued his recital of precedents, during which he excluded every vestige of emotional colour from his speech. But when he sat down, his client's case had been stated in all its aspects and great legal learning had been steadily reinforced by a quiet but determined logic. On the whole, a finer performance can seldom have been heard in the English courts. It is true that he was pleading not before a jury, but before a Bench of judges, but the restraint, one might almost say the coldness of the speech throughout, is none the less remarkable. And yet coldness would be an ill-chosen word. Reading the speech at length we detect underneath its smooth and equable manner a deep tone of conviction. There can be no doubt that St. John, Hampden's friend, had this matter very much at heart. Knowing the judges to be what they were, it is doubtful whether he could have had any high hopes of securing a judgment, but he knew at least that he had a case to present of great, indeed of national significance, and he knew also that it would gain nothing by forensic showmanship. In the rarer forensic qualities of balance and proportion his speech might well claim to be a masterpiece. It is even to-day possible for a layman to read through the maze of its legal argument with a clear and even exhilarating

sense of direction. St. John as he spoke was making history, and as we read him three hundred years later the drama of that subdued utterance holds us still.

When St. John had finished his great speech the judges might very well, for anything further that there was to be said, have proceeded to consider their verdict. But although there was really nothing much more to say, a very great deal was said. Sir Edward Littleton, the Solicitor-General, replied to St. John in a speech that lasted three days. It was then November 14th. On December 2nd Robert Holborne resumed for Hampden, and spoke for four days. Sir John Bankes, the Attorney-General, then took three days in his conclusion for the Crown, and it was December 18th before the end of his argument was reached. Between that date and St. John's opening on November 6th, the case had actually been before the court eleven full days. A few points only from these remaining speeches need be noted. In reply to St. John's contention that there was no national emergency that could be pleaded in justification of the writs, the Crown submitted that in fact the writs themselves specified such an emergency. To this Holborne retorted that as St. John had pointed out an emergency that was to be met in seven months' time was not to be regarded as an emergency at all, and further that the writs only spoke of the dangers to merchants from pirates, and not at all of dangers to the realm from foreign enemies, which was the only kind of emergency recognised by the law. The officers of the Crown flatly repudiated the authority of St. John's precedents. They themselves claimed legal precedent for the

King's arbitrary imposition of taxes, but their case in general was based on a much wider assumption of the King's divine right and absolute authority. Sir John Bankes returned over and again to the burden 'He is an absolute monarch,' and his last words were, 'My Lords, if there were no law to compel unto his duty, yet nature and the inviolate law of preservation, ought to move us ; these vapours which are exhaled from us will again descend upon us in our safety, and in the honour of our nation. And therefore let us obey the King's command by his writ, and not dispute. He is the first mover amongst these orbs of ours, and he is the circle of this circumference, and he is the centre of us all, wherein we all as in the loins, should meet ; he is the soul of this body, whose proper act is to command. I shall need no permission to do justice in this matter to the King.' Holborne himself for Hampden had a few days earlier indulged in a little high flying of his own : 'Before I enter into the argument further . . . I here profess for my client and myself, that while we speak of political advice, and how far a governor is subject to error . . . we do always with thankfulness to him acknowledge our present happiness to be blessed with so just a prince, and we fetch it from our hearts, and were his Majesty so immortal as he deserves, and that his successors might be heirs to his virtues and his Crown, we should wish that the Regal Power might be free from political advice and unlimited.' At which point he was interrupted by Lord Chief Justice Finch, who informed him that it was not within the competence of the Bar to talk about future government, and that



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it 'was not agreeable to duty to have you bandy what is the hopes of succeeding princes when the King hath a blessed issue so hopeful to succeed him in his Crown and virtues.' To which discreet display of loyalty Holborne replied that he was thinking of an age far off, perhaps five hundred years hence.

Diversions of this kind, however, were rare in the proceedings. Now and again when St. John ventured on a word of liberal political theory, he was checked from the Bench, and the Crown once got itself into a tangle by the absurd suggestion that if Hampden thought he had been too highly assessed he should have lodged his complaint with the Sheriff. In general, however, it was all very solid pleading, the Crown, indeed, often being reduced to transparent subterfuges by the logic of the defence, but confident nevertheless that its influence with the judges would carry the day. All the arguments having been heard, the court rose, the judges being allowed to record their decisions at leisure. Before the close of the current term, Berkeley, Crawley, Vernon and Weston had delivered their judgments and were unanimously for the Crown. In the Easter Term following, Trevor followed their example, while Jones decided also for the King, but with the strangely suggestive reservation that none of the money collected under Ship-money writs should be applied to the uses of the Privy Purse. What the King thought of this very odd judgment does not appear to be recorded. At the same time, Hutton pronounced unequivocally for Hampden, and flatly declared the writs to be illegal. It will be remembered that he and Croke had been dissatisfied signatories to the Star Chamber

opinion. Croke now vindicated his conscience in circumstances memorably described by Whitelock. The judge, yielding again to the influence of the Court, had decided to give his verdict for the King, and had already prepared the argument that he was to deliver from the Bench. On further reflection, however, he was increasingly troubled by his misgivings, which were strenuously encouraged by his wife. She told her husband that 'she hoped he could do nothing against his conscience, for fear of any danger or prejudice to him, or his family, and that she would be content to suffer want, or any misery with him, rather than be an occasion for him to do, or say anything against his judgment or conscience.' Greatly to everybody's surprise, and not a little to the consternation of the Crown, he joined Hutton in judgment for Hampden. While now the Country Party could have little hope that a majority from the Bench would pronounce in favour of the man who had become their champion, the fact that two of the six hitherto recorded judgments had given legal sanction to the popular cause, refreshed their spirits, and seriously retarded the collection of Ship-money throughout the country. The remaining opinions were not delivered until Trinity Term, when Denham and Davenport, in the midst of what was now becoming a flame of national enthusiasm, declared also for Hampden. On the 9th of June, however, Finch and Bramston decided the issue by pronouncing for the Crown, and on the 11th of that month the Attorney-General moved in court that the decision against the defendant should be entered, and on the following day that judgment

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should be given. The dissenting judges, having placed their opinions on record, announced that while they were of 'one opinion and the rest of the judges another . . . yet we must apply ourselves to their resolution, and our voices are involved in theirs.' The judgment against Hampden would accordingly stand as that of the court.

## IV

It is a pathetic witness to the insufficiency of man's wisdom that he is never able to foretell the smallest thing about his personal future. The caprices of individual fortune, perhaps, do not make this surprising. But strange it is that, practised by the ages, man is moreover incapable always of knowing anything about the immediate future of society. These lines are written in 1933, and we who live in these days have unhappy reason to realise this. The convulsions that have befallen us in these late years have invariably fallen on a world bewildered by the unexpected stroke. There is no experience or intelligence among us to-day whose forecast as to what will be happening in a twelve-month would be more than the merest guesswork. Statesmen and economists, for all their courage and goodwill are as pitifully in the dark as the most uninstructed man in the street. So, in the light of history, we can see it very notably to have been in the England of 1638. The country was then within two years of the most impressive and the most significant crisis that had befallen its history, and yet, although many men were conscious of the general unrest, there were even then but few who did not believe in a vague way

that somehow or another things would settle down without violent disturbance. The actual condition of the country's mind was in fact curiously complicated.

Charles, having got his verdict in the Hampden case, drifted again with his Ministers into an agreeable mood of security. The feeling was flattered by the fact that the Country Party, hardened to some extent as it was by the action of four dissenting judges, quickly relaxed into the feeling of impotency by which it had long been possessed. The urgency of the Puritan revolt was not to be disputed, and it was widespread. But it was scattered up and down the country, and in the absence of Parliament it had no means of focusing itself, or indeed of realising its own extent and power. Once the tension of Hampden's trial was over, the lesson of the verdict was soon forgotten, or at least it seemed to be forgotten so far as any material change in government was concerned. It is true that the Crown, having scored its equivocal triumph, was anxious to dwell upon it as little as possible. The collection of Ship-money went forward, and although Hampden's example threw fresh obstacles in the way of the assessors at every turn, the levy was still a source of substantial revenue. It is to be noted, however, that no steps seem to have been taken to enforce the payment of Hampden's twenty shillings, in respect of which judgment had been given against him, and when Lord Saye and Sele demanded that his own case should be brought to trial, the Crown determined to take no further risk and summarily ruled that the Hampden case had once and for all settled a question that could not be reopened.

The country was in fact living under a delusion that was shared by both parties. Neither the King nor the people took a just measure of the growing revolutionary strength, and neither realised how near that strength was to fulfilment. So dark did the future seem to the Puritan leaders that many of them contemplated emigration. Hampden who in 1632 had been one of the patentees under a grant of land in America that was later settled as Connecticut, is even said to have actually embarked with Cromwell when an order from the Privy Council stopped their sailing. The legend seems to have no more than a doubtful if any foundation in fact, but it was widely current, and was in any case a reflection of reality.

At the same time, the excesses of the Star Chamber continued at the very moment when St. John's pleading might at least have brought Whitehall for a moment to its senses. John Lilburne, a young man of good family, was brought before the Star Chamber in his twenty-fourth year charged with the publication of seditious pamphlets. It is true that Lilburne, of whom it was said that if he was left alone on earth John would quarrel with Lilburne and Lilburne with John, was a termagant in breeches if ever there was one. He was in later years to fall out with the Commonwealth as he now fell out with the Crown. He had a rooted prejudice against authority of any kind. The punishment that was inflicted upon him by the King's officers, and his manner of receiving it, none the less made him a new storm centre of popular indignation. When called upon to plead he refused to take the oath, and, in order that he might think better of it, was remanded to prison. Brought again

before the court, he persisted in his contempt and was sentenced in default. He was fined £500 and whipped through the streets at a cart-tail from the Fleet prison to the pillory in Westminster. Although the flogging was carried out with such severity that it endangered his life, he screamed out maledictions on the bishops as he was dragged along, and continued to do so while standing in the pillory until he was gagged. He thereupon somehow managed to extract from his pockets several copies of the censured pamphlet and scattered them among the people, and 'stamped with his feet, thereby intimating to the beholders he would still speak were his mouth at liberty.' The Star Chamber, which was in session while the sentence was being executed, on being informed of this scandalous behaviour, ordered that Lilburne should be removed to the Fleet, and there placed in the wards 'where the basest and meanest sort of prisoners are used to be put,' with irons on his hands and legs; that the warden should allow no one to have access to him; that any books or papers sent for him should be impounded; and that the names of any visitors desiring to see him should at once be reported to the Chamber. In order to prevent the recurrence of such disgraceful scenes, it was further ordered that thereafter all persons sentenced to receive corporal punishment by the court should have their garments searched before execution, and that their hands should be bound behind them until it had been carried out.

At no time in history have there been wanting educated men and women to believe in the efficacy of this kind of thing. Even if cruder minds are to be



allowed their opinion that brutal methods are necessary for the restraint of brutal elements in society, it is lamentable to find people of finer perceptions resolute in their advocacy of such methods for the correction of opinion. Charles and Laud were men of severely limited intelligence, but they were not barbarians either in their culture or their environment. Moreover, they were men of professed, and it would seem sincere, personal piety. And yet they not only tolerated, they exercised a ferocity through their courts that the most primitive paganism could not have instructed. Even more unintelligible was the agency of Wentworth in the same evil follies. He too was tragically misguided in his political conceptions, but he was a man of much personal nobility, of philosophic learning and of an alert if disdainful understanding. That at least is the picture which has been accepted by history, not without reputable evidence. And yet, sometimes it is difficult to discover the understanding in a minister who could so grievously miscalculate the character of his countrymen, and lend himself to abuses so flagrant in their futility. His belief in arbitrary government was a profound if mistaken conviction, and the opposition of men his equal in breeding and qualities may well have enraged him. But were it not for the evidence of his own hand it would be incredible that Thomas Wentworth could write of John Hampden to the Archbishop of Canterbury in this strain : ‘ Mr. Hampden is a great Brother ; and the very genius of that nation of people leads them always to oppose, both civilly and ecclesiastically, all that ever authority ordains for them. But, in good faith, were they rightly served,

they should be whipped home into their right wits ; and much beholden they should be to any that would thoroughly take pains with them in that sort. . . . In truth, I still wish Mr. Hampden, and others to his likeness, were well whipped into their right senses. And if the rod be so used that it smart not, I am the more sorry.' This was the man who had once been forward in the Petition of Right. And, while he wrote, he still detected no signs of the storm by which he was so soon to be overwhelmed.

Confident, however, as Charles and his Ministers might be in spite of all auguries as to the condition of affairs at home, they were forced to take more serious notice of the disaffection in Scotland. There the form of service ordained by the prelacy was provoking riots in the churches. At the sound of Amen, an old woman in St. Giles', Edinburgh, flung her stool at the preacher's head, shouting, ' What ye villain ! Do you say mass in my lug ! ' and a dog with black and white spots running along the street was called a bishop. In February, 1638, great bodies of Scotsmen were signing a national covenant, engaging ' to labour by all means lawful to recover the purity and liberty of the gospel, as it was established and professed before the innovations.' In November, the Church Assembly at Glasgow, in the presence of the King's agent, the Marquis of Hamilton, abolished episcopacy in open defiance of law. The challenge was accepted by the Crown, and what was known as the first Bishops' War was the consequence. But in the meantime, the Puritan leaders in England had been evolving a religious distinction of their own which was to play an important part in the future of the country.

## CHAPTER IV

### PARLIAMENT AGAIN. THE DEATH OF STRAFFORD

#### I

THE quarrel between the Scots Presbyterians and the English Episcopalians was a quarrel between two types of mind of very similar character. Both believed in absolute church rule, without liberty of conscience, the only distinction being that, whereas the Presbyterians held that their congregations should be instructed by individual clergy teaching by common consent with the sanction of the Bible, the Episcopalians placed the clergy under the disciplinary control of bishops. The distinction is one that may seem to be of little importance to minds not intimately engaged in ecclesiastical matters. But in 1638 it was one that involved two powerful bodies of men in a feud of relentless bitterness. It so happened that in the sphere of political action the Presbyterians, by virtue of their opposition to the English church, which was in effect the English Crown, became associated with the Country Party, which was to be led by the great Puritans into armed conflict with the King. But it is a mistake to suppose that these Puritans themselves were more closely in sympathy with the Presbyterian Church of Scotland than they were with the Episcopalian church of Laud. Hampden and

Cromwell were the champions not only of political freedom in England, they were the leaders of the new religious independence. It is true that when Cromwell came to power in the Commonwealth the political exigencies compelled him to many actions which reflected small credit on his principle of faith. It is the common experience of history that the usurper, however pure his motives, and however single-minded his devotion, cannot wholly escape the contaminating influence of expediency. When Cromwell had to hold the State together during the Commonwealth, the universal and uncompromising application of his principles would have involved him in political and social difficulties that he dare not face. If in this respect the record of that great man is not blameless, there is at least none that more honourably survives the censure. His independence was sometimes unequal to the test of practice, but it gave a direction to religious thought by which England was to be freed for ever from the shackles of ecclesiastical tyranny. And first among the champions of this innovation was John Hampden.

The independent party stood for tolerance and open interpretation of the Scriptures. Its watchwords were freedom of opinion and liberty of worship. It believed in church organisation, but it must be of mild and uncensorious character. Within its own constitution there was room for many shades of religious thought and emotion, the extremes of which were well represented by Cromwell and Hampden. Both men stood firmly for the principle that a man's faith was his own business. They did not extend liberty to the licence of godlessness, but otherwise

counselled as little subjection to authority as was consonant with any church control at all. With this common conviction, however, the two men differed greatly in the personal application of their principles. Cromwell's was a nature that continually wrestled with the Lord. The phrase to our modern way of thinking may have something a little portentous about it, but to Cromwell it was a quite simple and living reality. Communion with God, almost with the actual corporeal presence of God, was a daily habit of his mind from the time when he walked about the Huntingdonshire fields as a farmer until the day when he died, Lord Protector of England. The contact with God was a necessity without which the ordinary pursuits of life would have been impossible. This passionate and devouring love, the sustenance of his soul, was mysteriously involved in wrath and terror. The idea of condemning another man to everlasting punishment on account of this or that spiritual heresy was insupportable to his free mind, but for himself the fear of offending God, of losing touch with the divine benevolence, was a constant and often tormenting fear. At times it drove him almost to madness, and it impregnated all the occasions of his life with a deep melancholy. Not that he was by any means an anti-social or untunable man. On the contrary, he was notable for his domestic graces, his boisterous humours, and his tender affections. His searching and often prostrating piety never alienated him from the business of the world. In this aspect of his spiritual character there is an oddly unexpected resemblance between himself and Samuel Johnson, to whom the politics of the great Protector

were anathema. It was one of the principal sources of Cromwell's strength that with a religious zeal that has hardly been excelled in the spiritual record of any man, he never for a moment at heart became a religious fanatic. Convictions as fierce as his are seldom in the history of mankind compatible with a tolerance so constructive and so fearless.

Hampden's religion was of a widely different kind. Like his cousin, he was a man of natural piety, and a man of affairs, but his piety had little or nothing of the other's volcanic character. When his design of emigrating had been frustrated and the judgment of his trial had left the real issue unresolved, he returned to his Buckinghamshire estate, and there we see him, happy in the society of his children, diligent among the gardens and orchards that he was never too busy to enjoy, indulging freely his taste for sports of every kind, spending delightful hours in his library, and devoting much of his time to his business as a Justice of the Peace. The indomitable will that had now made him a national hero was allied to a gentleness of disposition that won the affection of his friends and the respect of his enemies. This natural urbanity of spirit was reflected in his religious life. He knew none of Cromwell's humiliations, it may be none of his transports. The great principle of liberty within the law, both for church and state, which was no less an inspiration to him than it was to Cromwell, was supported in his mind by a far more equable temperament than his cousin's. Discipline for Cromwell was a daily conflict, for Hampden it was a natural and easy habit. Cromwell's household was one of

deep devotions, and many amiabilities, but it must also at times have been one of turbulence. At Hampden House, standing at the foot of the Chilterns, alongside the vale of Aylesbury, nothing turbulent was allowed to disturb the serenely regulated order of a quietly disciplined family life. As the master of the house became more closely engaged in national affairs, there were many seasons of anxiety, but throughout them all he himself set an example of cheerful fortitude. Genial, unruffled, clear in his conscience and in his thought, he was a revolutionary imposing his will upon an age without having to raise his voice or strain a sinew. In his religion he was true to himself. He feared God, he was devout in his practice, and he did not allow piety to be a burden to his soul.

It must not be supposed that this temperateness, which when contrasted with Cromwell's fervour appears almost as quietism, was in any degree the product of indifference. Of all the issues that were perplexing the country, church reform was, perhaps, the one that most closely engaged Hampden's interest. The political implications of Laud's church government apart, Hampden did passionately desire the establishment of the independent principles which he professed. Milton, in his *Treatise of Civil Power in Ecclesiastical Causes*, stated authoritatively what those principles were :

‘ Seeing, therefore, that no man, no synod, no session of men, though called to the church, can judge definitively the sense of Scripture to another man's conscience, which is well known to be a general

maxim of the Protestant religion, it follows plainly that he who holds in religion that belief, or those opinions, which to his conscience and utmost understanding appear with most evidence or probability in the Scripture, though to others he seem erroneous, can no more be justly censured for a heretic than his censurers, who do the same thing themselves, while they censure him for so doing. For, as them, or any Protestant, which hath most authority, the Church or the Scripture, they will answer doubtless the Scripture. And what hath most authority, that, no doubt, they will confess is to be followed. . . . The Papist exacts our belief as to the Church, due above Scripture ; and, by the Church, which is the whole people of God, understands the Pope, the general councils, prelatical only, and the surnamed fathers. But the forcing Protestant [i.e. the Presbyterian], though he deny such belief to any church whatever, yet takes it to himself and his teachers ; of far less authority than to be called the Church, and above Scripture believed. Which renders his practice both contrary to his belief, and far worse than that belief which he condemns in a Papist. By all which, well considered, the more he professes to be a true Protestant, the more he hath to answer for his persecuting than a Papist.'

It will be seen that in Milton's view the only right position for a Christian to take is one that avoids the excesses of the Papists on the one hand and the Presbyterians on the other, and this precisely was the position taken by Hampden and the Independents.

The greater fame of Cromwell has so far obscured



that of Hampden that most people to-day know little of the latter beyond the fact that he was in some way associated with Ship-money. His death before he had an opportunity to take the part for which he was so conspicuously fitted in the great events of which he was one of the principal sources, has, further, resulted in his taking far less than his due prominence in the annals of the time. The personal records of him are few, and of these by far the most notable is the passage in Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion*, by which he is chiefly known to the few people for whom he is more than the shadow of a Ship-money case. Edward Hyde, who did not become Earl of Clarendon until 1661, was born in 1609, and so was Hampden's junior by fifteen years. The intensity of his later royalism was not indicated by his early public career. As late as 1640, he was still so far associated with the Parliamentary party as to be one of the managers of Strafford's impeachment. As a young man he had, therefore, ample opportunity for forming an estimate of Hampden's character, and his late devotion to the Stuarts necessarily made the great Puritan leader an object of anything but his flattery. Clarendon was not distinguished for gentle dealing with his antagonists, and anything that he says in favour of one whom his own party had so much reason to traduce must be taken rather at above than below its face value. And it is clear, while Clarendon is constrained to give a twist to his conclusion by saying that Hampden's qualities were such as to make him more dangerous in doing mischief, that the character of which he was writing was one that was irresistible to his own natural

## THE DEATH OF STRAFFORD

sympathies. There is a charming little letter written by Hyde to Whitelock in 1637, which indicates very gracefully what those sympathies were.

‘ My Dear,

I am glad you prosper so happily in Issue Male, God send the good Woman well again, which my Wife prays for, as an encouragement for her Journey, which she shall shortly be ready for ; you may depend on a Doe on Monday, God willing, although this weather forbids you to look for a fat one. My pen is deep in a Star-Chamber Bill, and therefore I have only the Leisure and the Manners to tell you, I am very proud that you are a Friend to  
Your most affectionate Servant.

EDWARD HIDE.’

The man who could write that was likely to see through even the darkest political prejudices into a character so amiable as Hampden’s, and although when writing his history in later years he says, ‘ His death therefore seemed to be a great deliverance to the nation,’ we know as we read his testimony to the dead man that it comes from a very tender conviction. It is tempting to borrow from Clarendon’s account piecemeal, to embellish this narrative of Hampden and his times, at discreetly chosen intervals, but it is so important as a whole that it seems preferable to insert it at this place, when we have been considering the nature of the man who, resting now from his first great popular crusade, was shortly to leave his retirement for ever and become a foremost figure, it may almost be said the foremost

figure in the trial of his party's cause, until he fell, the first of its national heroes, five years later.

Clarendon, having given a short account of the Battle of Chalgrove Field and recorded Hampden's death, proceeds thus :

‘ He was a gentleman of good family in Buckinghamshire, and born to a fair fortune, and of a most civil and affable deportment. In his entrance into the world he indulged to himself all the license in sports and exercises and company which was used by men of the most jolly conversation. Afterwards he retired to a more reserved and melancholic society, yet preserving his own natural cheerfulness and vivacity, and, above all, a flowing courtesy to all men. Though they who conversed nearly with him found him growing into a dislike of the ecclesiastical government of the Church, yet most believed it rather a dislike of some churchmen, and of some inducements of theirs which he apprehended might disquiet the public peace. He was rather of reputation in his own county than of public discourse or fame in the kingdom before the business of Ship-money : but then he grew the argument of all tongues, every man enquiring who and what he was that durst at his own charge support the liberty and property of the kingdom, and rescue his country from being made a prey to the Court. His carriage throughout that agitation was with that rare temper and modesty that they who watched him narrowly to find some advantage against his person, to make him less resolute in his cause, were compelled to give him a just testimony. And the judgment that was

given against him infinitely more advanced him than the service for which it was given. When this Parliament began, (being returned knight of the shire for the county where he lived,) the eyes of all men were fixed on him as their *Patriæ pater*, and the pilot that must steer their vessel through the tempests and rocks which threatened it. And I am persuaded his power and interest at that time was greater to do good or hurt than any man's in the kingdom, or than any man of his rank hath had in any time : for his reputation of honesty was universal, and his affections seemed so publicly guided that no corrupt or private ends could bias them.

‘He was of that rare affability and temper in debate, and of that seeming humility and submission of judgment, as if he brought no opinions with him, but a desire of information and instruction ; yet he had so subtle a way of interrogating, and under the notion of doubts insinuating his objections, that he left his opinions with those from whom he pretended to learn and receive them. And even with them who were able to preserve themselves from his infusions, and discerned those opinions to be fixed in him with which they could not comply, he always left the character of an ingenious and conscientious person. He was indeed a very wise man, and of great parts, and possessed with the most absolute spirit of popularity, that is, the most absolute faculties to govern the people, of any man I ever knew. For the first year of the Parliament he seemed rather to moderate and soften the violent and distempered humours than to inflame them. But wise and dispassioned men plainly discerned that that moderation proceeded

rather from prudence, and observation that the season was not ripe, than that he approved of the moderation ; and that he begat many opinions and motions, the education whereof he committed to other men, so far disguising his own designs that he seemed seldom to wish more than was concluded ; and in many gross conclusions, which would hereafter contribute to designs not yet set on foot, when he found them sufficiently backed by majority of voices, he would withdraw himself before the question, that he might seem not to consent to so much visible unreasonableness ; which produced as great a doubt in some as it did approbation in others of his integrity. What combination soever had been originally with the Scots for the invasion of England, and what farther was entered into afterwards in favour of them, and to advance any alteration in Parliament, no man doubts was at least with the privity of this gentleman.

‘ After he was amongst those members accused by the King of high treason, he was much altered, his nature and carriage seeming much fiercer than it did before. And without question, when he first drew his sword he threw away the scabbard ; for he passionately opposed the overture made by the King for a treaty from Nottingham, and, as eminently, any expedients that might have produced an accommodation in this that was at Oxford ; and was principally relied on to prevent any infusions which might be made into the Earl of Essex towards peace, or to render them ineffectual if they were made ; and was indeed much more relied on by that party than the general himself. In the first entrance into the

troubles, he undertook the command of a regiment of foot, and performed the duty of a colonel on all occasions most punctually. He was very temperate in diet, and a supreme governor over all his passions and affections, and had thereby a great power over other men's. He was of an industry and vigilance not to be tired out or wearied by the most laborious, and of parts not to be imposed upon by the most subtle or sharp ; and of a personal courage equal to his best parts ; so that he was an enemy not to be wished wherever he might have been made a friend, and as much to be apprehended where he was so as any man could deserve to be. And therefore his death was no less congratulated on the one party than it was condoled on the other. In a word, what was said of Cinna might well be applied to him ; *Erat illi consilium ad facinus aptum ; consilio autem neque lingua neque manus deerat* ; he had a head to contrive, and a tongue to persuade, and a hand to execute, any mischief. His death therefore seemed to be a great deliverance to the nation.'

## II

The national crisis which had been so long delayed was at length precipitated by the King's ill-starred adventure in Scotland. All hope of a peaceable solution of the ecclesiastical quarrel having been abandoned, Charles decided to reduce the Scots to obedience by force of arms. He set out on a punitive expedition that in conception and management was as rash and incompetent as any action of his unfortunate reign. Short of supplies, with all further

means of revenue exhausted, and with an army ill-disciplined and strongly suspicious of the cause in which they had been enlisted, he advanced on a people whose patriotic spirit took flame at what they regarded as no less than a murderous betrayal by their own King. When he reached Scotland, Charles was in command rather of a rabble, and an ill-fed rabble at that, than of an army prepared to fight. Camped on the outskirts of Berwick, they found themselves opposed by a force not greater than themselves in numbers, but altogether greater in determination. While awaiting action, one of the English recruits enlivened the proceedings at drill by misfiring a musket shot into the King's tent. Otherwise the royal lines were active in nothing but complaint. There was not enough to eat, there was no money, there was an insufficiency of arms, and there were no leaders in whom anybody had the slightest confidence. At the last moment, Charles, who had somehow managed to leave Laud and Wentworth behind him, decided that he had come on a fool's errand, and that the only thing to do was to stop before the disaster that was becoming ridiculous had gone any further. He accordingly signed the Treaty of Berwick, and made his way back to London.

Nobody with any sense of realities, however, could suppose that the Scots would be content to leave it at that. The Treaty itself was no more than a declaration of peace, providing in general terms for a future accommodation between the disputants. But in truth no accommodation was possible with a king of Charles's character on the one hand, and

an assembly of aggrieved Scotsmen on the other. Reaching London in August, the King learnt that the Scotch Covenanters were in no mood to make concessions, and he prorogued the Edinburgh Parliament, which, however, continued sitting in defiance of his order. He decided that further coercive measures must be taken, and summoned Wentworth from Ireland, where that Minister had been promoting the reign of 'Thorough' with indifferent success. Wentworth, who was now elevated to the peerage as Earl of Strafford, strongly counselled the resumption of war, undertaking to raise substantial levies for the purpose from the Irish Parliament in Dublin, and to bring over a considerable body of Irish troops. Laud concurred in the design; the quarrel was indeed more immediately his concern than anybody's. The stage was now set for an unexpected and critical turn in events.

It could not be hoped that the promised levies from Ireland, substantial though they were, would be sufficient in themselves to break the determined Scotch resistance. Resolved that it must be broken, Wentworth, chief director of the Court policy, looked round for means of supplementing available resources. His advice to the King was alarming, but nobody had any alternative to suggest. Ten years had now passed since the people had been allowed to have any voice in the government of the country. During that period, in spite of all reproaches and such spasmodic warnings as the Ship-money verdict, Wentworth and his associates in dictatorship had apparently gone from strength to strength. The disquieting experiences of the old

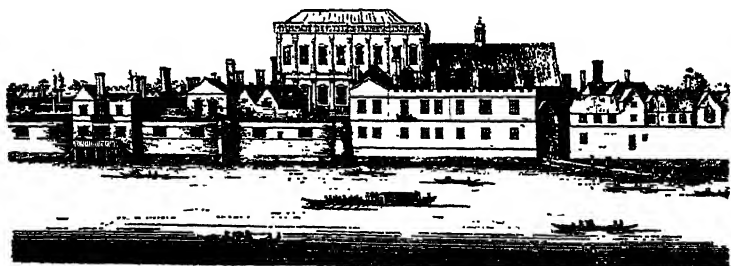


## PARLIAMENT AGAIN

dissensions at Westminster had almost faded out of memory. And, in any case, Wentworth believed that the Crown was now so firmly established in control of the State, that it need no longer entertain any doubt of its power to control the people's representatives. The delusion was a fatal one, but it decided Wentworth's course of action. He counselled the King to summon Parliament to Westminster. Writs were issued in the new year, 1640. Wentworth, confident that all would now be well, returned to Dublin as Strafford, for the purpose of organising the Irish levies. The Scots, resolved to keep in touch with the movement of events, sent commissioners to London. On April 13th, Parliament met at Westminster, Hampden and his friend, Arthur Goodwin, taking their seats as members for Buckinghamshire.

As the Commons reassembled after their long exile, there was an emotional tensivity in the House, the meaning of which was not lost upon astute observers. The King viewed the occasion with a deep suspicion

*Palatium Regis prope Londinum vulgo Whitehall*



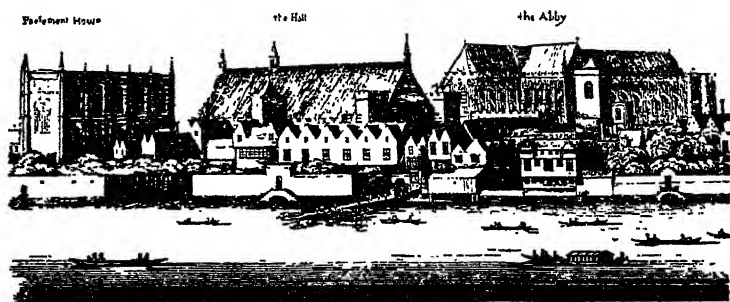
Whitehall and

## THE DEATH OF STRAFFORD

that all Wentworth's assurances could not move, and the King was right. The national revolt suddenly found itself again in a position where it could function, and its leaders met with an ominous determination never to loosen their hold on government until abuses had been redressed.

Strafford returned for the opening, and took his place in the Lords. He reported progress in Ireland, and urged that it was a very fitting example for the English Parliament to follow. As further evidence of the Scots perfidy, it was reported that the commissioners in London had been detected in treasonable correspondence with the French ; one of them, Lord Loudoun, had in consequence been sent to the Tower. This information was sent to the Commons, together with a message from the King, in which he complained ' of the intolerable indignities and injuries wherewith the Scots had treated him,' and declared that ' If the House of Commons would assist him suitable to the exigency of his occasions, he would quit his claim of Ship-money and give them contentment in all their

*Civitas Westmonasteriensis pars*



Westminster.

[Engraved by Hollar, c. 1640.]

just demands.' This message, says Whitelock, 'did much take with the House.' But this is a euphemism. The House indeed was willing to consider the possible advantage of a Scotch war, but only on one express condition, which was that nothing at all should be said about it until the grievances had been discussed. These fell under three heads : first, For clearing the subjects' property ; second, For establishing religion ; third, For the privileges of Parliament. At once the House was again plunged into the contention from which it had been dismissed in 1629. The members fell to motions of censure in which Hyde was active. The proceedings of Hampden's trial were laid on the table by Oliver St. John and Robert Holborne, members respectively for Totnes and Southwark. The major principles at stake were illustrated in debate by ridiculously trivial instances. A citizen who was jostled by a waterman wearing his noble master's badge in the shape of a swan, told the man to be gone with his goose, and had been ruined by fine and imprisonment for his pains. A tailor presenting his bill to a gentleman, on being thrust out of the room, exclaimed that he was as good a man as his customer, and in court had been 'compelled to release all his debt in lieu of damages.' These instances, trivial as they were, were symptoms of an attack that was bearing on the King with irresistible gravity.

Hampden himself toiled in the business of the House with unresting industry. He sat on committees to examine election returns, to report upon the state of the Commons' Journals, to investigate the violation of privilege in the last Parliament, to address the King against future denial of popular rights, to consider

petitions that were being sent in to the House from the country, and finally to reassert the principle that no supplies should be granted until redress from the Crown had been guaranteed. At this time also he received a request from Williams, the proscribed Bishop of Lincoln, desiring his interest. Hampden had no very high opinion of his petitioner, who with many qualities of mind and heart was in fact something of a time-server. The best things recorded of him are his behaviour towards Laud, when he had office and his old adversary was in disgrace, and his answer to Kilvert, a shady lawyer who had taken part in his prosecution, and later came to solicit his favour. 'I assure you pardon for what you have done before, but this is a new fault, that you take me to be so base a spirit as to defile myself with treading on so mean a creature : live still by pettyfogging and impeaching, and think that I have forgotten you.' Hampden's answer to Williams, written, as Nugent aptly observes, in a 'style of cold civility,' was as follows :

' My Lord,

I should be very ready to serve you in any thing I conceived good for you and fit for me ; but in your Lordship's present commands I doubt that to make overture of your intentions, and be prevented by a sudden conclusion of the Parliament, which many fear, may render your condition worse than now it is. To begin in our house is not the right place ; the most important businesses of the King and kingdom are pressed on with such expedition that any of a more particular nature will be but unwelcome, and hardly prosecuted with effect ; besides that, there is at this

instant a tenderness between the Lords and us about privilege ; and for my own unfitness, I need mention no more but my disability to carry through a business of this nature, though your Lordship may easily conceive another incompetency in my person. In these regards I humbly desire your Lordship to excuse me, and thereby to lay a new obligation upon me of being

Your Lordship's most humble servant,  
JO. HAMPDEN.'

Westminster.

*April 29, 1640.*

All this business was congested within a period of twenty days. The King, infuriated by this revival of the old obstinacy, flatly demanded the passing of twelve subsidies without more ado. The Commons refused to listen to him, and asserted that they would have nothing to do with the Scotch war until their lawful necessities had been relieved. Charles realised that it was very far from likely they would have anything to do with it even then, and in a reckless humour that took no account of consequences, he dissolved the Short Parliament on May 5th. The consequence, however, asserted itself immediately. The Scots, encouraged by the inactivity of the English Parliament, and incensed by the imprisonment of one of their commissioners, concentrated their forces, and on August 17th, crossed the Tweed at Berwick, occupying the four northern counties of England. The English Court was in confusion, and angry crowds assembled in the streets of the capital. The King and his Ministers made desperate efforts to raise men and

money. Attempts to confer knighthoods by sale, and to force a loan from the City of London met with no success. The only and quite inadequate source of supply was found in the personal friends and connections of the Court. On August 20th, the King marched out of London at the head of an army, no better furnished in means or discipline than the one that had failed so ignominiously in the preceding year. Two days later he declared the Scots to be rebels.

In the meantime, Hampden, who, on the dissolution of the Short Parliament had been arrested and searched, with no compromising results, was holding regular meetings with his Puritan friends at the home of his son-in-law, Richard Knightley, at Fawsley in Northamptonshire. They were confident in their belief that before long events would once again compel the King to call them to Westminster. The spectacle of a Scotch invasion of England left them undismayed. Although in personal sympathy most of them had as little relish for the Presbyterians as for the Episcopal Church, they realised that now, once and for all, the Scots cause against the Crown was identified with their own. The failure of the present royal enterprise, which they took to be imminent, could result only in an assembly at Westminster that would at last have an authority that could be escaped by none of the King's evasions. In this reading of the immediate future they were correct.

The King's expedition was again a fiasco. This time he was accompanied by Strafford, whose ingenuity and courage, however, could do nothing to save the situation. The Scots advanced to the Tyne, and took

## PARLIAMENT AGAIN

possession of Newcastle, meeting with no resistance from troops that had been demoralised from the moment when they had left London. Charles, with the government in ruin on his hands, was now faced again by the dread necessity of Westminster. In one last desperate effort to escape it, he summoned a council of peers at York, in the vain hope that they might devise a means of recovery. All they could do was to patch up another treaty, whereby the Counties of Northumberland and Durham were to be held by the Scots in pledge of their expenses at the rate of £850 a day until a permanent settlement could be reached. Charles returned to London with his monarchy crippled, and again issued writs to the constituencies. On November 3rd, 1640, the assembly that was to be memorable in English history as the Long Parliament met at Westminster.

### III

The experiment in arbitrary government had come to a disastrous end. Popular feeling had risen to disorder. A week before the meeting of Parliament a crowd of two thousand malcontents had entered St. Paul's Cathedral when an ecclesiastical court was in futile session, and had torn down the benches with cries of, 'No bishops! No bishops!' The Lord Mayor, refusing his assistance in the matter of the loan, had been put into prison. The citizens had attacked Laud's Palace at Lambeth in protest, the Archbishop having to escape by water, and the ringleader, on questionable evidence, had been executed. Popular sentiment conformed with the resolve of the Puritan

leaders that there should be no further compromise on the vital issues before the nation. When Hampden returned to Westminster again as a member for Buckinghamshire his prestige with the party was at its height. His conspicuous labours in the Short Parliament following upon the reputation that he had achieved during the Ship-money trial, made him at once the most popular and the most respected member in the House. He had recently married his second wife, Letitia Vachell, of Coley in Berkshire, and now moved with her to lodgings in Gray's Inn Lane. One of his near neighbours was John Pym. There seems to have been deliberate intention in this removal of his household from the country. He was convinced that the King had gone to the extreme length in his summary dissolutions of Parliament, and that the members now called to Westminster were facing no short-lived session. As he moved up to Gray's Inn with his new bride there was about him a sense of finality. The peaceful and beloved retirement under the shadow of the Chilterns had gone for ever. In the forty-seventh year of his age, he braced himself to ardours such as his busy and challenging life had not yet known. Some day perhaps he might return to his carnations and his peach trees, but these pleasant seclusions must for the time be put firmly out of mind. He was, in fact, never to know them again.

When Parliament was about to assemble, there was a long contention between the King and Strafford as to whether the minister should return from the north, where he had remained in charge of the Scotch negotiations, or come to take his seat at Westminster. Strafford by now was aware of the antagonism with



which he was regarded both by the Scots and by the popular party in England. The Scots had at first refused to treat with the English Court so long as Strafford was party to the conferences, and the whole tone of Puritan policy was clearly and violently against his own. He therefore submitted to the King 'That he should not be able to do his Majesty any service [in Parliament] ; but should rather be a means to hinder his affairs ; in regard he foresaw that the great envy and ill-will of the Parliament, and of the Scots would be bent against him.' He added that if he kept out of sight, he might also hope to keep out of mind, and, further, that if they should attack him in his absence, 'He might the better avoid, and retire from any danger, having the liberty of being out of their hands, and to go over to Ireland, or to some other place, where he might be most serviceable to his Majesty, but if he should put himself into their power, by coming up to the Parliament, it was evident that the House of Commons, and the Scots with all their party, especially being provoked by his coming amongst them, would presently fall upon him, and prosecute his destruction.' There was nothing pusillanimous in the caution. No man was less afraid of danger than Strafford. He was genuinely convinced that he might still be of great service to the King, and that if in the present temper of the country he fell into the hands of the Parliament, his future opportunities would be gravely jeopardised. It was a perfectly shrewd and statesmanlike view of the situation, but it was wholly displeasing to the King, who replied that there was no one in whose abilities he had so much confidence, and that in the very difficult business that was now being

opened Strafford's personal counsel would be indispensable. Charles then gave Strafford an assurance that has a curiously sinister character when read in the context of history. Strafford's presence was imperative, and as for his apprehensions, he might rest content that as Charles 'was King of England, he was able to secure him from any danger ; and that the Parliament should not touch one hair of his head.' Strafford gave way and came to London.

The King in his speech to both houses adopted a conciliatory tone. He was resolved to put himself freely upon the love and affections of his English subjects. He told them of the disasters in the north, he promised redress of grievances, and he desired that all suspicions between himself and his people should be set aside. But in these professions was a note of fear, even of despair, and they deceived no one. It was as the Puritan leaders had foreseen. The King was now using the speech of moderation and reason, but he was using it because he was bereft by circumstance of all other. For the moment civility was preserved. An exchange of compliments as the session opened could do nobody any harm, but the purpose of the House was no longer to be influenced by smooth words. For years the King and his advisers had been preparing the drama of this moment by disregarding oaths, pledges, justice and mercy. For years the liberal and constructive spirit of Puritan England had waited in patience, and often in agony, for the audit that was now to be made. Gracious assurances of reform no longer had any meaning. If the King could have cancelled the misdeeds of fifteen years his words might have carried some weight ; as it was, they

carried none. Much of the evil that had been done was past repair ; men had suffered things for which now no amends could be made. But the Long Parliament at the outset of its career was determined on two things ; that where justice could still be done to the victims of misrule, it should be done, and that the agents of misrule should be brought to account. John Hampden, the country gentleman of liberal learning and quiet manners, incapable of sophistry and sure of himself, leaving the enjoyment of wealth and the pursuits that he loved in order to place his great energies and talents at the service of the country, was the perfect embodiment of the Puritan revolution as it now came to judgment.

Although the truth had not yet finally asserted itself, a deadly breach between the Crown and the people was inevitable from the moment when the Long Parliament assembled. The demands that were to be made by the Country Party were such that in the long run they would have been certain to wear out the forbearance of a milder temper than the King's. The perspectives of time throw up the salient features of such a dispute as that which we are now considering into sharp relief. It is easy for us to see what precisely were the moral values involved in the Puritan revolution, the errors against which it was directed, and the principles by which it was controlled. But while condemning Charles and the policy for which he stood, it is unreasonable to assume that, even if his mind had been more balanced than it was, he could have assessed the situation with a due sense of proportion. A first essential of that situation in terms of historical truth was the dark background of his own misdeeds,

and it is too much to expect that he should have been aware of this at all. It is no exoneration of him, and it certainly does not mitigate his tragedy, to say that as blow upon blow struck him after 1640, he no doubt genuinely believed himself to be a martyr suffering under the iniquities of a wicked people.

Substance, again, would be given to this belief by the composition of the parties who were now meeting in mortal conflict. The Royalist cause was no more exclusively supported by compassionless oppressors of the people than was the Puritan cause exclusively by heroic patriots. In the revolutionary ranks were the most commanding men of the age, but there were also many political adventurers, shallow fanatics, and seedy agitators. On the other hand, the Royalist cause was led by three men wholly insensible to the political reality of their time, betrayed by their inability into a personal ruthlessness that has made their names an offence in history. But associated with them there were also many men of noble and disinterested spirit, who loved their country as devotedly as any Puritan and could think of revolt against the King only as black and inexpiable treason. The influence and the support of such men could not but encourage Charles in his belief that he was divinely appointed to maintain righteousness in the Kingdom. A wise man would have seen through the self-deception, but then a wise man would never have entertained it.

When, however, all these psychological niceties have been taken into account, the plain fact remains that in the quarrel of which the decision began in the Long Parliament, the Puritans stood for political and personal freedom in England, and the King's party

stood decisively against it. The charter which Parliament now proposed to win for the country was one by virtue of which all our later liberties have been enjoyed. When in a study of Charles II, I maintained that he was the first constitutional King of England, the view was challenged by some critics as being academically inexact. Nevertheless, this is precisely what Charles II in effect was in spite of himself. The modern definition of constitutional monarchy in detail was to be deferred until a later date, but at the Restoration the principle of parliamentary representation as an essential condition of the monarchy had been established beyond repeal. Charles II attempted in his practice to disregard the necessities of the fact, but fact it was. And its origins first took definite shape in the deliberations of the Long Parliament.

Many changes had taken place in the House since 1629. Selden was still there, though in an altered mood, but the great and cantankerous old lawyer, Sir Edward Coke, had died at the age of eighty-two. Missing, too, was John Eliot, dead of consumption in the Tower at the age of forty. Among the re-elected Puritan members who were to give the King trouble were Denzil Holles sitting for Dorchester, and William Strode for Beeralston, both of them forty years of age. Also, in opposition to the Court, there were the two Henry Vanes, father and son, members respectively for Wilton and Hull, and Bulstrode Whitelock, member for Marlow, the lawyer whose *Memorials* are an invaluable record of the age. Among the most notable of the Royalists were Sir Bevil Grenville, member for Cornwall, who had first sat in Parliament in 1621 at the age of twenty-five,

and Lucius Cary, Lord Falkland, who now at the age of thirty was taking his seat for the first time as member for Newport in the Isle of Wight. Grenville was a conspicuous example of the Cavalier gentleman in his unquestioning allegiance, chivalrous in character, and gallant always in conduct. Falkland, of as clear a spirit, was troubled in his mind by philosophic doubt of which Grenville knew nothing. He was opposed to the extravagances of the King, and it was not until he was convinced that the Puritans were becoming excessive in their designs that he finally declared himself against them. Both of these men were to be early victims in the war, fighting against Parliament. Similarly undecided in his mind at the opening of the Long Parliament was Edward Hyde, who had been made Keeper of Writs and Rolls of the Common Pleas as a young man of twenty-five, had sat for Wootton Bassett in the Short Parliament, and was now member for Saltash. At the age of thirty his sympathies were with the popular cause, but like Falkland he rapidly became suspicious of the Puritan policy and refused to associate himself with its logical consequences.

The acknowledged leaders of the Puritans in the House were Pym and Hampden, who during the election had made a tour on horseback together through the shires, calling upon the people of England to send such men to Westminster as would do them service in the struggle for their liberties. Pym was now fifty-six years of age. In the Short Parliament he ' brake the ice by a two hours discourse, in which he summed up shortly and sharply all that most reflected upon the prudence and justice of the

government, that they might see how much work they had to do to satisfy their country.' Clarendon called him 'the most popular man, and the most able to do hurt that hath lived in any time.' Although he was leading the stormiest revolution that had ever shaken his country, Pym was not by nature a revolutionary at all. His whole political career was governed by a deeply rooted passion for the constitution of England. His opposition to the Crown was inspired solely by his conviction that the constitution was being betrayed by a king who was sworn to its maintenance. When he died in 1643, still in the prime of life, he had worn himself out in a cause that he had served with evangelical devotion. Oliver Cromwell, sitting now for Cambridge in his forty-first year, had yet to become a national figure, while Henry Ireton, already burning in his Puritan zeal, was waiting on other than parliamentary opportunities. With John Hampden were his sons-in-law, Richard Knightley sitting for Northampton, and Robert Pye for Woodstock.

Among the first acts of the new Parliament was the impeachment of the judges who had found against Hampden in the Ship-money trial. Vernon had died in 1639, but Berkeley, Bramston, Crawley, Finch, Trevor, and Weston were all deprived of office, in some cases with heavy fines. The reservations made by Jones in his judgment of Hampden's trial seem to have protected him. The proceedings against Berkeley, which were substantially those against the others, were first proposed to a conference of both Houses in the Painted Chamber, by William Pierrepont, the member for Great Wenlock. He spoke of 'those monsters of necessity' the Ship-money writs, that 'to



*[Walker]*

OLIVER CROMWELL  
(1599-1658).



*[Artist unknown.]*

ROBERT GREVILLE  
2nd Baron Brooke  
(1608-1643).



*[Cooper.]*

JOHN PYM  
(1584-1643).



*[Artist unknown.]*

JOHN ELIOT  
(1592-1632).



avoid imminent danger that could not stay forty days for the calling of a Parliament, were therefore to go in September to have ships ready in March.' It was an adroit use of the point that had been made by St. John and Holborne at the trial. In pronouncing these lawful, said Pierrepont, Sir Robert Berkeley had subverted the honour of the Crown inasmuch as the judgment confirmed the King in his error that the royal prerogative could be above the laws. There was no demagoguery, but sober passion in his words. .

'The countryman followed the plough, and to his thinking he was assured of his right, property and liberty . . . He believed his neighbour, his landlord, his King, could not take his goods from him without his consent . . . This countryman hath heard the opinions and judgment of this judge, later seen his goods taken from him, without his, or his Knights of the Shire, or Burgesses consent or advice. These have made him, his wife and children, to join in tears to wish they had never been born ; they have made them think on many ways to keep safe that estate which was yet left them, have made them desire to sell all their goods and hide the money ; but then he remembers . . . how that he shall be carried to prison, and remain there if he pay not what please others to assess him. Then they think idle persons, the drones and moths of the Commonwealth, to be a wise people, whilst the countrymen expect, and can think of nothing, but being beggars.'

This judge, he added, had offended the laws, had offended the King, and had offended the people. He

had caused the King to take away his subjects' goods in ways that were most dangerous, and he was to answer for what his Majesty and they had suffered. 'I am commanded by the House of Commons to desire of your Lordships, that the proceedings against Sir Robert Berkeley Knight, one of the Justices of his Majesty's Court of King's Bench, may be put in as speedy a way of trial, as the course of Parliament will allow.' The articles of impeachment against Berkeley were eleven in number. They had reference to several judgments which he was alleged to have delivered in support of 'arbitrary and tyrannical government against law,' but chief among these was that on Ship-money. Berkeley did not escape the censure of the House, but was more fortunate in his future than some of his legal brethren who were impeached with him. 'This judge,' says Whitelock, 'was a very learned man in our laws, and a good orator and judge, moderate in his ways ; except his desire of the Court favour. He redeemed himself afterwards by supplying the Parliament's occasions with ten thousand pounds, and ended his days in a private retirement ; yet not without considerable gains by his Chamber-practice, and left a plentiful fortune to his family.' Finch, the Chief Justice, being summoned to the House on a charge of high treason, had a chair set for him near the Bar, and on being told by the Speaker that he might sit, 'He made a low obeisance, and laying down the Seal, and his hat in the chair, himself leaning on the back side of it, made a very elegant, and ingenuous speech, in his own vindication . . . and delivered with an excellent grace, and gesture as well as words.' He told the

House that he would rather beg his bread from door to door with their blessing than be never so high and lay under their displeasure. 'If I may not live to serve you, I desire that I may die in your good opinion and favour.' Many, says Whitelock, were exceedingly taken with his eloquence and carriage, 'and it was a sad sight to see a person of his greatness, parts, and favour, to appear in such a posture, before such an assembly, to plead for his life and fortunes.' Nevertheless, he was the same day convicted of treason, among other things, 'for soliciting, persuading and threatening the judges to deliver their opinions for the levying of Ship-money.' He was to appear on the following day before the Lords to receive sentence, but made an early departure down the river and escaped into Holland. He lived in exile until 1660, where he died just before he could share in the rewards of the Restoration. At the same time, Leighton and Lilburne, Prynne, Burton and Bastwick were brought from their prisons to place their grievances before Parliament. The judgments against them were reversed and expunged from the records, and they were awarded damages against the Crown. Much that they had suffered, however, was beyond redress. Their liberation was accompanied by remarkable scenes of popular enthusiasm. Nugent's description cannot be bettered :

'The three who had been banished were accompanied by an escort of many thousands, from the place of their re-landing, with banners and music, in gaudy and tumultuous procession. The spectacle, in some respects, was a singularly touching one,

marked by their very different conditions, habits, and ages ; the green and ardent youth of Lilburne ; the infirmity of the hoary Leighton, who had lost in captivity both sight and hearing, and nearly the use of his limbs ; and the deep and sullen energy of the rest ; equals in their fortitude and their sufferings, and restored, under circumstances of such excitement, from a lengthened penance, during which, though withdrawn from sight, they had never been forgotten, and the traces of which remained in the wasted forms of the elder, and in the scars and brands visible on all.'

IV

The conviction of the judges had been greatly facilitated by an event of even weightier moment. Berkeley's impeachment took place in February, 1641. In the preceding November, a committee of twelve, including Pym, Hampden, Holles, Strode, Selden, St. John, with Whitelock as chairman, had been appointed by the House to prepare articles of impeachment against Strafford. These proceedings were set on foot before the session was a fortnight old, and although Strafford was not to come to trial until the following March, this sudden opening of the action startled everyone by its severity. Here was matter that put the complimentary exchange of civilities in its place. Even Strafford, who must have foreseen the danger, could hardly have feared that it could be so instantly upon him, but immediately the proceedings against him had been instituted he can have had little hope of the issue. He must have known that the impeachment could not have been undertaken by a

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House that was not determined to carry it through to the tragic end. He was to make a bold and proud fight in his own defence. But from the first he must have foreseen the extremity in which he would have to rely only on the protection that had been promised by his King. It is true that, after the charges had been laid, he wrote from the Tower, on February 4th, a brave letter to his wife :

‘ Sweet Harte.

It is long since I writ unto you, for I am here in such a trouble as gives me little or no respite. The charge is now come in, and I am now able, praise God, to tell you that I conceive there is nothing capital, and for the rest I know at the worst his Majesty will pardon all, without hurting my fortune, and then we shall be happy by God’s grace. Therefore comfort yourself, for I trust these clouds will away, and that we shall have fair weather afterwards.

Your loving husband,

STRAFFORD.’

These were gallant words, but there was little comfort in them.

The committee managing the impeachment was in constant session, but the investigations were intricate, and the calling of witnesses, many of them from Ireland, caused not a few delays, and it was not until January 30th, that Pym was able to lay the articles before the Lords. The accused was immediately summoned to hear them read. They were twenty-eight in number, drawn on two hundred sheets of paper, the offences specified covering a period of

fourteen years. Strafford asked for three months in which to prepare his defence, but the Commons contested so long a grace. After deliberation the Lords ordered him to deliver his answer by the 24th of February, on which day it was duly read to the King. On the day following it was placed before Parliament.

There was some dispute on the question of procedure. The Commons held that the accused could not be represented by Counsel in a case of high treason, while the Lords ruled that this was true only in regard to pleading in matters of fact, and not in matters of law. On this point the Commons gave way. A difference as to whether the trial should be held in the House of Lords or House of Commons was decided by an agreement that it should be in Westminster Hall. The Commons announcing their intention of attending as a body were given leave by the Lords to attend only as a committee.

At this point in the proceedings Whitelock reports an astonishing turn of events. A proposal, he tells us, was made to stop the impeachment by giving Crown offices to the principal Puritan leaders. Lord Saye was to become Master of Wards, Pym Chancellor of the Exchequer, Holles Secretary of State, and Hampden Tutor to the Prince. There were also to be other appointments. He adds that the matter went so far that resignations were sent in, so that the places might be filled in accordance with the proposal, but that for some reason which was not divulged the affair came to nothing. And then follows this remarkable passage : ‘ The great men baffled thereby, became the more incensed, and violent against the

Earl, joining with the Scots commissioners, who were implacable against him.' No wholly satisfactory explanation of this statement has ever been made. It is not impossible that there may have been a project for a complete reorganisation of the government in which principal parliamentarians should hold some of the high offices of State, while Strafford should remain in place under proper control. Such an expedient, though very unlikely in the pass to which things had then come, would have been dishonourable to nobody. On the other hand, there seems to be in the tone of Whitelock's words a veiled suggestion of conspiracy, and that there should have been anything of the sort is simply not credible. That Pym and Hampden and the others could have acted at this stage, or indeed at any time, from motives of self-interest and without the knowledge of their party is outside the range of possibility. Whitelock gives no hint as to how or from whom the proposal originated, or as to whether it was ever actively considered by the Puritan leaders concerned. Had he been a hostile witness we might have suspected that there was some substance in his reflection which is not clearly divulged. As it is it can only be supposed that his pen for once has failed to do justice to his usually clear powers of expression. For Whitelock himself was chairman of the impeachment committee, he was as active as anyone in the arrangement and presentation of the evidence against Strafford, and elsewhere he speaks highly of his colleagues, notably Pym and Hampden. Of the last named he wrote, after Chalgrove Field : ' His affection to public liberty . . . exposed him to many difficulties and troubles, as in the business of the

ship-money, of the loan, and now in Parliament, where he was a most active and leading member ; he spake rationally and subtly . . . he was well beloved in his country . . . as also in the House of Commons ; he died lamented.' There is, in fact, an ambiguity in Whitelock's entry that defies elucidation. It cannot be wholly disregarded, but there are no conceivable grounds for reading into it an imputation against Hampden's integrity or that of his associates. Nugent was right in stigmatising Hallam's observation that the conspiracy ' might suffice to reclaim an ingenious mind from the worship of Pym and Hampden ' as a calumny destitute of foundation.

Whitelock gives a vivid picture of the scene in Westminster Hall at Strafford's trial. In the middle of the Hall were forms covered with red cloth for the Lords, who sat in their Parliament robes, facing the Earl of Arundel, Lord High Steward of England. The Earl of Lindsay, made Lord High Constable of England for the occasion, was responsible for order. On either side of the Hall were scaffolds on the lower ends of which the Commons sat uncovered ' as a committee of the whole House,' and such privileged members of the public as could find places. At the upper end were curtained galleries for the King and the members of his family, flanking a royal chair of state which stood on a raised platform in the open Hall. There were places reserved for ladies of quality, and a partition for the Parliament committee with an ante-room adjoining for consultation. Adjoining this was another partition for Strafford, with accommodation near him for the Lieutenant of the Tower, under whose arrest he



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stood, together with the Earl's counsel and secretaries. The bishops, being excluded by the canons of the church from participation 'in cases of blood or death,' took no part in the trial.

On Monday, March 22nd, 1641, the Hall being full to every allotted seat, the Earl was brought to the Bar by the Lieutenant of the Tower, in the presence of the King. He was dressed in black, and wore his George on a gold chain. In the forty-eighth year of his age, Strafford was suffering from gout and the stone, and as he stood before the tribunal he stooped a little. Nevertheless, the dignity of his bearing, the candour of his gaze, and the grace of his behaviour made a profound impression. When he spoke it was with 'weight, reason, and pleasing grace.' The impeachment was then read, and his answer to it. On the following day the examination of the articles was opened by Pym, to be suspended while a sealed paper was handed in from the Irish Parliament containing news that the Commons there had already convicted the accused of high treason. Strafford complained that there was a conspiracy against him to take away his life, was called to order for accusing the Parliaments of two kingdoms of conspiracy, apologised on his knees, and 'so that matter was passed over.' On March 24th, examination of the articles proceeded, conducted largely by Whitelock, who submitted to the committee that 'on one of the articles there was no satisfactory evidence to put in.' Upon this the argument was taken up by another member, Sir Walter Earle, who was badly let down by his witnesses. Strafford, who throughout the trial was quick to take any opening, rose at once and for the

first time addressed the court, with a shrewd composure that never deserted him.

‘ My Lords,

I am a poor gentleman, a prisoner at the Bar ; against whom several persons learned in the laws and of great ability for pleading, and strength of reason, and other noble persons of great parts and eloquence, have enforced the particular matters of my charge ; and I had well hoped they had been drawing towards an end. But now (my Lords) unexpectedly a new and great pleader sets upon me tired out before, and this noble Knight hath laid a heavy burden indeed upon my shoulders, he hath opened more heinous crimes against me, than all those gentlemen who have gone before.

‘ The learned gentleman who urged the matters of the last articles against me, when he came to this twenty-fourth article, sat down, and seemed to decline it, and yet he left nothing material which was not urged home by him.

‘ But this noble Knight goes beyond all, and indeed beyond the article itself, observing things not contained in it, and impossible to be : And could he have proved this, it had been truly a miracle. But I humbly beg your Lordships pardon, I am not willing to spend any of your time impertinently ; I shall only say this, That where nothing is proved against me, I know your Lordships great wisdom and justice will expect no defence from me.’

Lord Digby, realising that Strafford had scored, rose to announce that the committee had no intention

of pressing the article in question, as indeed had been apparent from Whitelock's abandonment of the argument. Digby was witty at the expense of Sir Walter Earle, and desired that the court 'would be pleased to look upon what that noble Knight had said, but as a superfoetation.' There was thereupon, as we should say, much laughter in court, during which the Queen asked who Sir Walter Earle was, remarking, 'that water-dog did bark, but not bite ; but the rest did bite close.' Close, indeed.

All the articles of the impeachment having been at length examined, Strafford was given leave to speak further in his own defence if he desired to do so. He asked for an adjournment until the following morning, which with some reluctance was granted. The next day the Lieutenant of the Tower reported that his prisoner had had a violent fit of the stone in the night and was extremely ill. A further adjournment was accordingly ordered, a deputation of the Lords being appointed to keep themselves informed as to the Earl's condition in the Tower. These delays continued until April 13th, when Strafford was again able to attend Westminster, and was confronted with a new and very damaging piece of evidence. Sir Henry Vane, the elder, then Secretary of State, being out of town, had desired his son to forward him some papers, sending him his keys for this purpose. The younger Vane, on searching his father's cabinet, discovered the notes of a conversation that had taken place between the King, Strafford, Laud, Cottington and other Privy Councillors. According to these notes, Strafford, on being asked by the King how a defensive war could be undertaken without money, advised a forced loan

in the City of £100,000, and vigorous execution of the Ship-money levy. Then followed the words : ‘ Your Majesty having tried the affection of your people, you are absolved and loose from all rule of Government, and to do what Power will admit. Your Majesty having tried all ways, and being refused, shall be acquitted before God and man. And you have an army in Ireland, that you may employ to reduce this kingdom to obedience.’ Laud was alleged in the notes to have supported this advice by saying : ‘ You have tried all ways, and have always been denied, it is now lawful to take it by force.’ Young Vane, whose sympathies were strongly anti-royalist, at once saw the importance of this unhappy paper, and showed it to Pym, who insisted that it should be put in as evidence against Strafford. On being asked what he had to say about it, Strafford replied that testimony supported by the notes of only one man was not valid in law, even in a matter of debt, much less in a matter of life and death, that he flatly denied having used the words imputed to him, that the project for an Irish invasion of England was a pure invention, and that of the eight Privy Councillors who had been present at the meeting reported in the notes, one was dead, one, the Archbishop of Canterbury, could not give evidence, Vane’s statement was categorically denied by himself, and the remaining four were prepared to swear that they never heard him speak the words which were now being used for his destruction. Strafford’s protest, however, was of no avail. No one seriously supposed that Vane’s notes were merely a fabrication, and, moreover, they did nothing but confirm other evidence

that was in every man's knowledge as to Strafford's policy.

A disturbing incident then occurred. The incriminating paper disappeared. Whitelock, as secretary to the committee, had custody of all documents relating to the trial, and he fell under suspicion. Search for the missing paper was fruitless, and every member of the committee was ordered by the House to take his solemn oath that he knew nothing of what had happened to it. It was noted that Digby, who, not without reason, was suspected of Royalist sympathies, was particularly vehement in his disclaimer. When the King's papers, however, fell into the hands of the Parliament after the Battle of Naseby, among them was found a copy of Vane's notes in Digby's hand. What had happened was then clear. Digby had borrowed the notes, and given a copy to the King for Strafford's use. This accounted for the readiness, noted by many at the time as being strange, with which Strafford replied when confronted by the document in court. The assumption is that Digby, the paper having been missed before he could return it to the files, was afraid to take the risk of replacing it. He subsequently fought for the King at Edgehill, was defeated by the Roundheads at Carlisle Sands in 1645, and died as the Earl of Bristol in 1677.

Strafford, having made his ineffectual answer to this new evidence, was called upon to make any final defence for himself that he might wish. He first challenged the competency of any existing law to bring his alleged offences under the taint of high treason. No man in the kingdom had come under

its operation for two hundred and fifty years. In other words, he had been given no warning. ‘If a man pass the Thames in a boat,’ he said, ‘and split himself upon an anchor, and no buoy be floating to discover it, he who owneth the anchor shall make satisfaction : but if a buoy be set there, every man passeth upon his own peril. Nowhere is the mark, nowhere the token upon this crime, to declare it to be high treason. . . . Let us not awaken these sleeping lions, to our destruction, by taking up a few musty records, that have lain by the walls so many ages forgotten, or neglected.’ He proceeded to urge that if a minister could thus be impeached on what he claimed to be obsolete authorities, no man would be found willing to serve the State in public office. And then, in words of deep and arresting pathos, he concluded :

‘My Lords, I have troubled you longer than I should have done, were it not for the interest of these dear pledges a saint in Heaven hath left me.’

With tears in his eyes he went on :

‘What I forfeit myself is nothing ; but that my indiscretions should extend to my posterity, woundeth me to the very soul. You will pardon my infirmity, something I should have added, but am not able, therefore let it pass. And now, my Lords, for myself, I have been, by the blessing of Almighty God, taught that the afflictions of this present life, are not to be compared to the eternal weight of glory, which shall be revealed hereafter. And so, my Lords, even so, with all tranquillity of mind, I freely submit

myself to your judgment and whether that judgment be of life or death.'

No man could listen to such a speech without being deeply moved, and none did. But personal courage and dignity in the hour of his extremity were no sufficient answer to the treason and destruction of which Strafford stood accused. Pym and Hampden and their friends could not but have foreseen that the trial upon which they were determined would be attended by such emotional crises. They were not insensitive to the pity of it all, but they were not to be turned from their purpose. And now suddenly they were faced by a contingency which resulted in an action that has vexed controversy ever since. As Strafford sat down, his last words said, it was realised that the weight of his personal appeal would pass for the moment, but on the other hand, the objection which he had raised in law, whether tenable or not, was disturbing to the prosecution. The opinion of historians has been sharply divided as to what the situation at the moment really was. Modern writers, such as Gardiner and Prothero, maintain that after Strafford's defence it was improbable that the Lords would convict on a charge of high treason. Others again, believe that after the evidence that had been taken, no escape for Strafford was possible. And on the whole this appears to be the likelier view. Vane's notes alone must have been sufficient to destroy him. In any case, after Strafford's speech, some of the leaders of the impeachment took fright. Pym made an effective recapitulation of the charges, and St. John in the House argued at length, with all the

resources of his brilliant advocacy, that the charges, if proved, were in fact high treason by law. Not satisfied with these precautions, however, a strong body of Puritan members in the Commons moved that the issue should not be allowed to depend upon the verdict of the already constituted tribunal, but that a Bill of Attainder should be brought in against Strafford. This meant, in effect, that if the Bill could be carried, Strafford would be condemned by an extraordinary Act of Parliament. St. John, declaring with unaccustomed rhetoric that there was no law for wolves and beasts of prey, urged the House to take this step. Pym and Hampden, anxious though they were for Strafford's conviction, stoutly opposed a measure which they considered to be arbitrary and unconstitutional. Hampden insisted that if St. John was to be allowed to argue on the point of law, Strafford's counsel should be conceded the same privilege, and this was done. The promoters of the Bill, however, succeeded in their design, and on April 19th, the Attainder was laid before the House.

After a sharp debate it was passed, with fifty-nine dissenters, who were thereafter known as the Straffordians. The attitude of Pym and Hampden at this juncture is obscure. They were against the Attainder, and for proceeding with the trial. But aggravating influences were at work. A plot was discovered to employ the army against Parliament, and commissioners were appointed by the House to investigate it, Hampden being dispatched to Alnwick to examine the Earl of Northumberland whose brother was one of the suspects. There was also rumour of another plot to release Strafford from the



Tower by force. When the Earl of Essex, who was to command the Puritan army on the outbreak of war, exclaimed at this moment : ‘ Stone dead hath no fellow,’ he was voicing a conviction that was firmly seated in the minds even of the men to whom the Bill of Attainder was an offence against right and reason. Hampden, who had been steadily active in the impeachment, took no part in the debate on the Attainder. On the other hand, in the absence of his name from the list of Straffordians, there is nothing to show that he opposed it. It is reasonably certain that he and Pym, while they disapproved of the instrument that was being employed to achieve their ends, nevertheless believed that at any cost those ends must be fulfilled in the interests of the country. The niceties of procedure, pregnant with dangers as they might be, were not of much consequence as against the necessity for the removal of a man whose past history left no security for the future while he lived.

On April 24th, the Bill was read by St. John to the Lords. On May 1st, the King made a passionate plea to both Houses met to proceed severely against Strafford, telling them that in conscience he could not condemn the Earl of high treason, and that neither fear nor any other consideration should compel him to do so. His Majesty then assured them that his conviction of his Minister’s misdemeanours was so clear that he thought ‘ the Earl not fit hereafter to serve him, or the Commonwealth, in any place of trust, no not so much as a constable.’ The next day was Sunday, and on it was solemnised the marriage of Mary, Princess Royal,

then a child of ten, to William, Prince of Orange. Their son was to be William III of England. On the same day sermons were preached from the pulpits calling for the execution of justice on Strafford, and on the following morning the cry was taken up by an armed rabble thronging the streets of Westminster. On May 5th, the Commons brought in a Bill making it illegal for Parliament to be dissolved without its own consent, and on the same day the Lords by twenty-six votes in a session of forty-five, passed the Bill of Attainder, and Strafford stood convicted. Nugent observes with admirable insight, 'It was, on the whole, the case of the most dangerous minister that England ever knew, destroyed by the most dangerous precedent that an English Parliament ever established.' Both Bills were then placed before the King for his assent.

Charles's character was now put to a test that was beyond its stamina. In the absence of Laud, who had already been committed to the Tower under articles of impeachment, the King took advice of several other bishops, among them Williams, who had been restored to his diocese. The Parliament Bill, while it struck a mortal blow to Charles's belief in his divine prerogative, could at least be accepted without dishonour. But in the Bill of Attainder Charles's personal integrity was deeply involved. He had given his private pledge to the man who had been his friend and minister, the man with whom the fundamentals of his own policy had been conceived and administered. Less than a week before he had made a solemn public declaration, that in no circumstances would he be a party to Strafford's

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death. Now as the Bill lay before him a multitude of circumstances, indeed, conspired to destroy his honour. The elected agents of the country had spoken decisively. Popular feeling on every hand was vociferous. Strafford himself wrote from prison praying his master to take no such risks as would be incurred by his refusal to give the Bill his assent : ‘ Sir, my consent herein, shall more acquit you to God, than all the world can do besides ; to a willing man there is no injury done.’ This was chivalrous, but even then Strafford cannot have believed that in defiance of all undertakings his King would betray him. The bishops, highly impressionable to the menacing influence of public opinion, assured the King that Strafford’s offence was conclusively treason, and that the Attainder was legal. They counselled that nothing but its execution could ‘ appease the enraged people, and that the consequences of a furious multitude would be very terrible.’ One man alone honoured himself by refusing to support this advice. William Juxon, Bishop of London, told the King that no authority on earth could redeem him from his pledge, and that before God and man he was in honour bound to refuse his consent. But there were no resources in Charles’s character that could resist the pressure, and on May 10th he signed a commission empowering three Lords to pass both Bills into effect.

Strafford, when the news was brought to him, at first would not believe it, ‘ and being assured that it was passed, he rose up from his chair, lift up his eyes to heaven, laid his hand on his heart, and said, “ Put not your trust in Princes, nor in the sons of

men, for in them there is no salvation.”’ On the following day, May 11th, the King sent a letter by the Prince of Wales to the Lords, begging that they would confer with the Commons with a view to sparing Strafford’s life. It was even rumoured that some such promise had been made to him before he had given his assent to the Bill. If any such promise had been given, it had certainly been given without authority. The young Prince went back to Whitehall with no tidings of comfort, and on May 12th Strafford was brought to the scaffold on Tower Hill. On his way to execution he passed the window of the room where Laud was confined, and was allowed to pause while he received the blessings of the man with whom he had travelled to so lamentable an end. The conduct of his last moments was superb. The wrongs that England had suffered by him were wrongs inflicted by one of whom it must be allowed that he was at worst, in Macaulay’s words, a ‘great, brave, bad man.’

## CHAPTER V

### THE LONG PARLIAMENT. OUTBREAK OF THE CIVIL WAR

#### I

ANY one of three possible views may be taken of Strafford's death. Some people may hold the opinion, based upon considerations of law, and having little regard for political realities, that it was a case of legal or rather of 'extra-legal' murder. Others may take the matter of fact view that Strafford, convicted of a capital crime, paid the prescribed penalty. Between these two extremes there are many readers of history, who, while fully sensible of the enormity of Strafford's offence, cannot refrain from speculating on the possibility of there having been some less violent means of correction. To such minds the projected coalition, if indeed it ever was projected, between the Puritan leaders and the Crown, far from being disreputable in character, seems to offer a solution that might have saved Strafford from the scaffold and the country from civil war.

This moderating disposition, however, probably fails to take into account the human elements that were involved. The inescapable fact, present always to the Puritan leaders in their counsels, was that the King throughout his reign had proved untrustworthy, and that in no conceivable circumstances could he be trusted. His dealings with the people had

repeatedly confirmed the melancholy truth that in no undertaking whatever was his pledge of any value. There is no reason to suppose that a change of administrative machinery would have effected any change in his character. Had Pym and Hampden gone into office with Charles and the ministers of his autocracy, there is little doubt but that Court intrigue would not have rested until it had dissolved the unwelcome alliance. On a full view of the evidence, it is difficult to escape the conclusion that Strafford's death as it befell was inevitable. Cromwell's words, 'Grim necessity,' when nine years later Charles himself shared the fate of his ministers, were exactly chosen.

Whatever may be the right or the wrong of the matter, the step, once taken, committed Parliament beyond recall to a course of extreme action. After so terrible an onset there could be no turning back. That there was some shortening of the breath, however, as the tragic spectacle of Tower Hill was contemplated, is indicated in the manner in which Laud was treated. He was already under impeachment in the Tower. Since the case against Strafford had been carried, there could have been little serious difficulty in proceeding to conviction of the Archbishop. Laud was now an old man of sixty-eight, and although he deserved no good of his country, he was as much entitled to the protection of the law as any other prisoner under arrest. The King's abuse of *Habeas Corpus* had indeed been a constant burden of popular complaint, and now Laud was himself victimised by treatment for which he had been so often and so properly reproached. After Strafford's indictment, there were no reasonable grounds upon which Laud

could have been exempt from the same rigours, but there was no excuse whatever for placing him under impeachment in the Tower and keeping him there for three years without trial. We cannot escape the inference that either Parliament feared a reaction of public feeling after the destruction of Strafford, or that it was itself momentarily staggered by the length to which it had gone. Hampden has to share the blame with the other Puritan leaders for this culpable irresolution. When Laud was at length brought to trial in 1644, Hampden was dead, but there is nothing to show that he took any steps to correct an injustice of which, as is clear from all the known circumstances of his character, he must have been acutely sensible. It can only be supposed that, as is always the case at times of revolutionary convulsion, all men's judgments were distempered, and that even Hampden's clear vision, perhaps the clearest at that time in England, was not wholly exempt from the common infirmity. It may be noted that Laud's execution in 1645, certainly no less merited than Strafford's, emphasised also the fallibility of revolutionary action. When the Bill of Attainder against Strafford was brought in, it was repeatedly asserted in the House that in no case should it be considered as a precedent, and yet precisely the same proceeding from impeachment to Attainder was taken against Laud.

Within six months of its opening, the Long Parliament had completely circumscribed the King's power. Strafford was dead, Laud was under arrest, the Star Chamber had been abolished, and Charles himself had been forced to surrender his right to dissolve Parliament. During the following months the House

settled down to a routine of regular business. In August an adjournment was made until the 20th of October, a committee of fifty members under Pym's chairmanship remaining at Westminster with executive powers. During the recess the King, with the consent of Parliament, went north in person to conclude a treaty with the Scots, having in the meantime appointed the Earl of Essex general of all the armies south of the Trent. The journey was a fateful one. No sooner was he away from the domination of Westminster than Charles fell at once to the meditation of schemes for the recovery of his lost authority. The most hopeful of these was simple in its conception. If he could placate national feeling in Scotland, and secure in return a guarantee of neutrality at least in English affairs he might be able to exercise his personal influence with the army and the many influential elements that had viewed Strafford's death with misgiving, and so isolate Parliament from any effective means of resistance to a challenge by force. As usual, the King was hopelessly astray in his calculations. He was reckoning without the Scots, without the army, without the determination of Parliament, and without the real sentiment of the country. Nevertheless, for the moment he was able to deceive himself that he was making some headway in Scotland. He became the ready dupe of Archibald Campbell, a cunning and entirely unscrupulous politician. In return for a shameless distribution of offices amongst his own followers, Campbell gave the King the coveted assurances.

Rumours of these proceedings reached London.



Pym, the official leader of the Country Party in Parliament, was a little at a loss what to make of them, but he shrewdly suspected the truth. Parliament reassembled on October 20th, and the members were in a mood of unrest bordering on alarm. During the year, among other measures before the House, had been a Bill for excluding the bishops from voting in Parliament, and holding any civil office. The more extreme Puritans were agitating for a total abolition of the episcopacy, but the more moderate leaders, and Hampden in particular, assured Falkland that if the Exclusion Bill would pass they would not proceed with the severer measure. The Bill, however, was in fact defeated by the Lords, yielding to strong church influences, whereupon Hampden associated himself with the promoters of the Root and Branch Bill, which provided for abolition. In making this decision, he found himself for the first time on a matter of fundamental policy separated from Pym. Once he had promised his support to the scheme he was active in its conduct. The King, reassured by his experience in Scotland, and jealous of this new interference with ecclesiastical government, wrote a letter to London asserting that he was prepared to die in maintaining the discipline and doctrine of the Church and protesting against what he regarded as a new abuse of parliamentary power. The letter fell into the hands of Parliament, and stopped the passage of the Root and Branch Bill through the Lords. At the same moment a violent and bloody Catholic insurrection broke out in Ireland. The suspicions of the Country Party rose to certainty that fresh intrigues were at work.

The House resolved once and for all to make its position clear, and the Grand Remonstrance was the result. This celebrated instrument was an elaboration of the Petition of Right. It reviewed the long story of the King's misrule since his accession to the throne, and it provided against future corruption of government in both Church and State. The historic debate, which began at three o'clock in the afternoon of November 20th, went on throughout the night until ten o'clock on the following morning. As the candles burnt low, many members 'partly by reason of their age, or infirmity of body, being wearied out' left the House during the night. Others, weakening in resolution, followed their example. But at last the question was put to the vote, and by a majority of eleven the Remonstrance was passed. One of its opponents began to speak in protest, and was violently called to order. Another member proposed that the Remonstrance should be printed and forthwith published to the country. In such a scene as had never been witnessed in Westminster before, members hurled abuse at each other across the floor, clothes were tumbled and swords were drawn. Through the turmoil was heard Hampden's voice, bidding them remember who and in what place they were. 'We had caught at each other's locks,' says Philip Warwick, afterwards the King's secretary, 'and sheathed our swords in each other's bowels, had not the sagacity and great calmness of Mr. Hampden by a short speech prevented it.' It was on this occasion that Cromwell told Falkland that if the measure had been rejected he should have sold all that he had and gone from England.

## OUTBREAK OF THE CIVIL WAR

At the end of November the King reached his capital on his return from Scotland, was feasted by the citizens of London and entertained them in return to a banquet at Hampton Court. On December 1st the Grand Remonstrance was presented to him. On the following day he delivered a speech to both Houses of Parliament, saying that he had in Scotland

‘ Had so good success, that he had left that Nation a most peaceable and contented people. That he doth not find this Nation so settled as he expected, but full of jealousies and alarms, of designs and plots, that guards have been set to defend both Houses. That he doubts not of his subjects affections to him by his reception at his return ; and mentions his own affection to his people, and so far from repenting of what he had done for them, that he was willing to pass any thing more that might justly be desired for their liberties, and for maintenance of religion.’

He then issued a proclamation commanding obedience to the law in matters of religion, and forbidding the introduction of ‘ any rite or ceremony, other than those established by law.’ He was in fact ordering Parliament to refrain from any further action against the episcopacy. On December 14th, he again addressed Parliament, urging resolute action in the Irish business. As though conscious that his own complicity in the matter was in some way suspected, he emphasised his ‘ detestation of all rebellion, particularly of this.’ He called for an immediate levy of men, and since the question had been raised as to what were the bounds of the royal prerogative in such

matters, he proposed to avoid any debate by passing the writ for pressing under his own sign manual.

Plainly, the provisions of the Grand Remonstrance had made no impression on the royal mind. The House now became desperate. In order to realise the prevailing temper, it is necessary to return for a time to the events that attended the King's visit to Scotland. Hampden had been a principal actor in these, and it was from his counsels that the House very largely took its tone. Charles in his accommodating mood towards the Scots had been lavish in his favours. Archibald Campbell, whose optical squint was reflected in his character, had been one of the chief antagonists of the King at the beginning of the Scotch quarrel. In order to secure his interest, Charles, on his visit to Edinburgh, made him the first Marquis of Argyll. Alexander Leslie, a soldier of fortune who had served under Gustavus Adolphus and had drifted as an old campaigner into association with Campbell, became Earl of Leven. John Campbell, Baron Loudoun by marriage, who had previously been sent by Charles to the Tower, had also been made an earl. James Hamilton, who had been the King's agent in Scotland during the episcopal troubles, was created a duke. When news of these transactions reached London, there was but one interpretation to be placed upon them by Parliament. The King plainly was attempting to alienate Scotch influence from the Country Party in England to his own person. The committee of the House then in session acted quickly. Exact information as to the King's movements must be obtained. The expedient of sending spies would be clumsy and insecure. Much the more discreet

method would be to appoint a commission to Scotland, ostensibly delegated to watch the negotiations of the treaty that the King was conducting, but in fact instructed to keep close watch on the King himself. Two peers and four Commoners were appointed, and of these last the responsible agent was John Hampden.

## II

Arrived in Scotland, they presented their credentials to the King at Holyrood. Invariably stupid as Charles was in public affairs, he was shrewd in his personal contacts, and he knew very well what the visitation meant. He preserved the appearance of unconcern, however, and the commissioners were graciously received. But they too were shrewd, and the state of affairs that unfolded itself to their scrutiny was such as might be expected only in transpontine romance. Argyll's bitterest enemy was James Graham, then the Earl, and after Marquis, of Montrose. He was twenty-nine years of age, and Argyll forty-three. Between the two men there was an implacable feud, the origins of which we need not examine. Montrose, by virtue of his later actions, has taken his place in history as a high-hearted example of chivalrous devotion. He was in fact a soldier of great gallantry and brilliant achievements, and in the end he laid down his life for his faith with memorable fortitude. But in these early days of his career, he was also a political adventurer in command of a cunning equal to Argyll's own. He had already been detected in a conspiracy of very dubious character against the covenanting army, and had been imprisoned at the instigation of Argyll. - He

was still in confinement when the King arrived in Edinburgh, but with the help of a servant contrived to put himself into communication with Holyrood. Passing from an assertion that he could convict Hamilton and Argyll of double-dealing, he proceeded to the much more welcome assurance that he could produce evidence to show that the Puritan leaders in Parliament had been in treasonable communication with the Scots army. Charles, ready as ever to be misguided by any foolish counsel, listened to Montrose. The possibility of defeating his inveterate foes at Westminster, however remote, was too enticing to be neglected.

At this moment the situation took on the full panoply of melodrama. Lord Henry Kerr, a young enthusiast in Montrose's counsels, openly denounced Hamilton as a traitor to God, King and Country, defying him to defend his honour with his life. Hamilton reported this conduct to the Scots Parliament, and Kerr was ordered by his father, Lord Roxburgh, to apologise in public. The young man appeared at Parliament House in Edinburgh accompanied by six hundred men in arms. After two days of wild disorder, Argyll and Hamilton fled. They were pursued by a body of irresponsible adventurers under the Earl of Crawford, who had sworn to bring them in alive or dead. It was rumoured that the design extended to an attack upon Parliament House, the liberation of Montrose, and the complete subjection of Scotland to the King's will. Montrose was to produce his evidence against the Covenanters, and then to march with Charles upon London, disperse the Parliament, and re-establish the King in absolute control. Charles, who

could make neither head nor tail of this wholly undisciplined commotion, helplessly complained that it was nothing but a plot to involve him in contention with the Scottish subjects whom he loved so well, and upon whose orderly support he so confidently relied.

The precise truth of what was known as 'The Incident' has never been revealed to history, and now at most it is of no more than academic interest. But at the time it made it clear beyond all question to the parliamentary commission in Scotland that the King was deeply involved in designs of which Westminster had and was intended to have no knowledge. They at once sent a report of these very confused events to London, and themselves shortly followed upon their news. They invited Charles to return with them, but with plausible if not convincing pretexts he delayed his departure. Reaching London they confirmed their despatches in detail, and when the House proceeded to the passing of the Grand Remonstrance it did so with the disconcerting knowledge that the King was contemplating some design the consequences of which might be of the gravest nature. And so it was that when, on December 14th, the King had addressed the members in terms that treated the Remonstrance with no less than contempt, they realised that there was no extravagance of which he was incapable, and were in a mood of desperation.

They protested to the King in words that even he could not fail to understand. By the privilege of Parliament, they said, the King had no right to take notice of any matter before the House until it had been submitted by them in due order, nor should he express opinions on any bill until it had been submitted

to him for his assent. Nor was it proper for the King to take exception to the conduct of business in the House, 'They being judges of their own errors and offences in debating matters pending.' His Majesty, in his speech of December 14th, had offended this privilege, particularly in what he had said about a military levy. They desired to know the names of the persons who had seduced his Majesty's gracious mind to this irregular conduct, in order that the offenders might be brought to account. Some answer to the Grand Remonstrance being imperative, its drafting was entrusted to Hyde, who was now definitely dissociating himself from the Puritan party. The declaration amounted to no more than an empty evasion of the points at issue. It assured his Majesty's loving subjects that, as always, he was diligent in their interests, that he would protect them against any injustice, and that they must not be deluded by the undutiful and scandalous aspersions cast upon his benevolent rule by a malicious libel.

In this atmosphere of what was fast becoming irreconcilable hostility, the suspicions of the House were further excited by yet another of the King's arbitrary actions. The Guards to which he had referred in his speech to Parliament on December 2nd, had been set round Westminster at the urgent request of Parliament itself, and were under the command of Essex, whom the members could trust. Charles now replaced them by Guards of his own choosing, under command of an officer who was known to be the King's creature. The House desired the Speaker to have this menace removed from their doors, and appealed to the High Constable for pro-



tection against the mobs that were assembling in the neighbourhood. Edmund Ludlow in his *Memoirs* tells a story which, although it comes from a Puritan source, is too circumstantial for mere invention. The King at this crisis, he says, realising at last that Parliament would be content with nothing but complete reform, determined to put a stop to its proceedings in spite of the Parliament Bill. Dissolution being out of his power, force was the only alternative, and with this end in view, says Ludlow, 'he encouraged a great number of loose debauched fellows about the town, to repair to Whitehall, where a constant table was provided for their entertainment. Many gentlemen of the Inns of Court were tampered with to assist him in his design, and things were brought to that pass, that one of them said publicly in my hearing "What ! shall we suffer these fellows at Westminster to domineer thus ? Let us go into the country and bring up our tenants to pull them out." Which words not being able to bear I questioned him for them ; and he either out of fear of the public justice, or of my resentment, came to me the next morning, and asked pardon for the same ; which by reason of his youth, and want of experience I passed by.' Certain it is in any case that the King was playing dangerously with the idea of force. He placed the Lieutenancy of the Tower in the hands of Thomas Lunsford, a ruffian who had narrowly escaped the gallows and was notoriously ready for any mischief. Within a few days, Parliament had successfully insisted upon his removal, whereupon he marched on Westminster at the head of an armed rabble, threatening, as Nugent says, to drag the members out by force. It is unreasonable to charge

the King with being directly a party to these proceedings, but his general conduct was responsible for them. Parliament, now thoroughly alarmed, put forward a Bill that should place the whole of the militia under a Commission of its own appointment. This Bill further contained a clause forbidding the King to press soldiers without parliamentary consent. Again, Charles, hearing of this measure while it was in progress, sent a furious message saying that nothing would induce him to pass it. It was precisely a repetition of his recent outrage on privilege.

Selden, deeply learned in constitutional law, opposed the Bill as being too radical in its assumption of parliamentary power. Constitutionally Selden may have been right, but the time for constitutional niceties had passed. The House believed, and it had every reason for believing, that the King was contemplating an appeal to arms as soon as opportunity was ripe. The only immediate precaution that could be taken in its own defence was to obtain control of the militia, and the Bill was an attempt to take it. The Long Parliament had now been in existence for more than a year, and ever since its first meeting the seeds of danger had been germinating. Violent as the measures against the King's ministers had been, they had been accompanied by genuine efforts to reach some accommodation with the King himself. At any time during the momentous months of 1641, Charles with the smallest exercise of good-will and common sense could certainly have established his monarchy on far firmer foundations than it had known since his accession. But neither good-will nor common sense marked any of his actions. In the face of every tragic

## OUTBREAK OF THE CIVIL WAR

warning he blindly pursued his course of intrigues, daily widening the breach between himself and men whose patience was now coming to an end. As the year closed, while it is true that the King was waiting only an opportunity to attempt a *coup d'état*, it is true also that the Puritan leaders were considering the inevitability of an armed conflict, and beginning to lay their plans accordingly. A new conception of the issue before the country was taking shape, and it was nothing less than the complete overthrow of a monarchy that was becoming insupportable. In this situation, there was inevitably a considerable revision of individual loyalties. Many men who had been with the Country Party in demanding reform, could not bring themselves to face the extreme step to which the logic of the circumstances was leading. As the year 1641 came in, the distribution of the parties that were to be known as Cavaliers and Roundheads in the field of battle was rapidly defining itself, and in the new order many old friends in counsel found themselves divided.

### III

It was at this moment that Charles destroyed the last hope of conciliation by an act of folly unparalleled even in his own misguided career. It was undertaken, so far as there is anything to show, entirely on his own initiative, his pretext being the evidence of treasonable correspondence with the Scots which had been furnished to him by Montrose. That there had been correspondence in the regular course of parliamentary business was a matter of common knowledge, but that it was in any sense treasonable was another question.

## THE LONG PARLIAMENT

Charles, without pausing for a moment to consider the consequences, decided on the impeachment of five members of the House of Commons and one peer. On January 3rd, 1642, he sent officers to the lodgings of Pym, Hampden, Holles, Haslerig, Strode, and Lord

*1 You ar to accuse those <sup>five</sup> ~~five~~ your lie & favourallie  
 2 you ar to reserve the power of making additionally  
 3 When the Comtee for examination is a naming (w<sup>ch</sup> you  
 must perswade to be close & under key of secrecie) if either  
 Essex, Warwick, Holland, Say, ~~Wharton~~, Wharton, or  
 Brooke be named, you must desire that they may be spared  
 because you ar to examine them as witnesses for me*

*Your loving faithful servant  
 Friend Charles R*

Instructions in the King's hand to Sir Edward Herbert, relative to the impeachment of Lord Kimbolton (Viscount Mandeville) and the Five Members (3 January, 1641/2). It is evident that Mandeville's impeachment was an afterthought, the King having at first, as appears in the erasures, included his name among the peers whom he intended to call as witnesses!

British Museum. Note from "Guide to Exhibited Manuscripts."

Kimbolton, with warrants to seal up their 'trunks, studies, and chambers,' and to place the members themselves under arrest. The confiscation was made, but the members themselves were absent, being in session. News of this action being brought to the House, a vote was immediately passed declaring :

'That if any person whatsoever shall come to the lodgings of any member of this House, and offer to

seal the trunks, doors or papers of any of them, or seize upon their persons ; such members shall require the aid of the constable, to keep such persons in safe custody, till this House do give farther orders.

‘ And that if any person whatsoever shall offer to arrest or detain the person of any member, without first acquainting this House ; That it is lawful for such member, or any person to assist him, and to stand upon his, or their guard of defence, and to make a resistance, according to the Protestation taken, to defend the privileges of Parliament.’

The King retaliated at once by having articles drawn against the members, as follows :

‘ For endeavouring to subvert the fundamental laws and government, and deprive the King of his legal power, and to place on subjects an arbitrary and tyrannical power, by foul aspersions on his Majesty, and his government, to alienate the affections of his people, and to make him odious.

‘ To draw his army to disobedience, and to side with them in their traiterous designs. That they traiterously invited and encouraged a foreign power to invade England.

‘ That they traiterously endeavoured to subvert the very rights and being of Parliament.

‘ Endeavouring to compel the Parliament to join with them in their traiterous designs : And to that end have actually raised and countenanced tumults against the King and Parliament.’\*

On these charges he sent his Attorney-General to the House with orders to place the indicted members

\* See Appendix A for a fuller copy of these Articles.

under arrest, convey them to the Tower, and impeach them before the House of Lords. On his making his demand to the Commons, the Attorney was met with a blank refusal. Enraged by their resistance and encouraged, it is said, by the Queen, who bade her husband go in and fetch those rascals out by the ears or never see her face again, Charles on the following day marched to Westminster at the head of an armed guard with the officers of the law, 'and followed by about two hundred of his courtiers, and soldiers of fortune, most of them armed with swords and pistols.' It was now afternoon. During the morning the impeached members had addressed the House. Hampden's speech gave the substance of all. Examining the principles upon which a loyal subject should act, he declared :

'To deny a willing and dutiful obedience to a lawful sovereign, and his privy council, to deny to defend his royal person and kingdoms against the enemies of the same, either public or private, or to deny to defend the ancient privileges and prerogatives of the King, as pertinent and belonging of right to his royal Crown, and the maintenance of his honour and dignity, or to deny to defend and maintain true religion in the land, according to the truth of God, is one sign of an evil subject.'

Elaborating these propositions at length, he concluded :

'I humbly desire my actions may be compared with either ; and both as a subject, a Protestant, as a native of this my country, and as I am a member of this present and happy Parliament, that I be esteemed,

as I shall be found guilty upon these articles exhibited against myself and the other gentlemen, to be a bad or a good subject to my sovereign and native country ; and to receive such sentence upon the same as by this honourable House shall be conceived to agree with law and justice.'

Gardiner rejects this speech, in the words of Firth who follows him, as 'a palpable forgery.' It is printed by Nugent from a contemporary pamphlet, and at length is an obviously confused report, a circumstance with which Robert Southey makes heavy play in his ill-tempered and sprawling notice of Nugent's work in *The Quarterly Review* (Vol. XLVII, July, 1832). Hampden, in the printed version of his speech, contradicts himself more than once, but the confusion is obviously of the reporter's making. Gardiner bases his rejection chiefly on evidence that he brings against another that was reported in a separate pamphlet on the same occasion as having been delivered by Pym. Even this evidence is flimsy, and certainly has no bearing on the Hampden pamphlet. I see no reason, on a careful examination of the facts, for regarding the latter as 'a palpable forgery.' Gardiner allows that, on the morning of the 4th, the accused members defended themselves. In substance the reported speech is precisely what Hampden might have been expected to say. I think that Nugent, in accepting it, was right, and his scientific critics, in rejecting it, wrong.

The House then adjourning for dinner, it had no sooner reassembled than news was brought of the King's approach on Westminster under arms. The

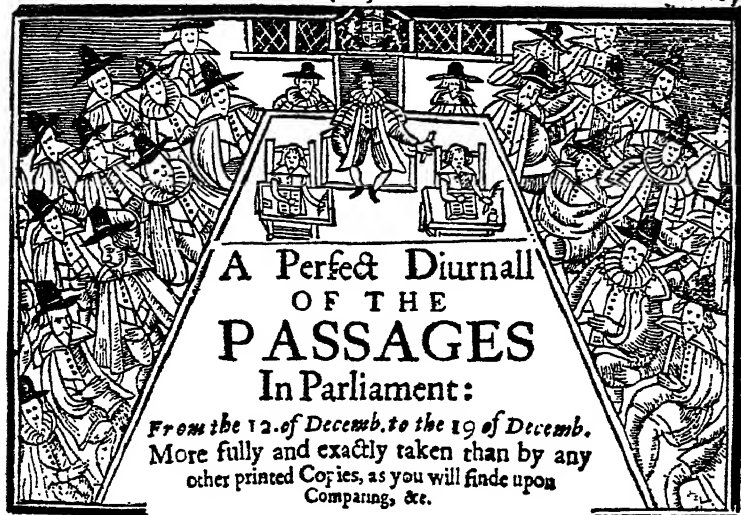
House ordered the five members to retire, which with many protests they did through a back door. The King, passing through New Palace Yard, entered Westminster Hall with his attendants, where they ranged themselves on both sides as he ascended the stairs and knocked at the door of the House of Commons. Accompanied only by his kinsman, the Prince Palatine, he entered as it was opened by the Serjeant, and glancing at the place which he knew to be Pym's, he exclaimed to his companion, 'The birds are flown.' As he strode up to the Chair, William Lenthall, the Speaker, was ordered by the House to keep his place, but the royal presence was too much for such composure, and he rose to give way to the King. The members, rising also, stood uncovered in unbroken silence as they faced their King in circumstances never before known in history. For a few moments no word was spoken as the King looked round to assure himself that the objects of his arrest had indeed gone. Then sitting in the Speaker's chair, as the House still stood, he addressed them :

'Gentlemen,

'I am sorry for this occasion, for coming unto you ; yesterday I sent a Serjeant at Arms, upon a very important occasion, to apprehend some that upon my commandment were accused of high treason, whereunto I did expect obedience, and not a message ; and I must declare unto you here :

'That albeit no King that ever was in England, shall be more careful of your privileges, to maintain them to the utmost of his power, than I shall be ; yet you must know, that in cases of treason, no person





*Collected by the same hand that formerly drew up the Copy for William Cook of Ewningfells Inn, and are to be sold in the Old Bailey. 1642.*

*Monday the 12. of December.*

**T**Here was instructions drawne up and agreed upon by the Commons for the association of the five Countiees of Essex, Cambridge, Hartford, Norfolk and Suffolk, that the Officers to be appointed by the Parliament to command in chiefe over the Forces, shall have power to summon together the deputy Lieutenants of the severall Countiees, and treat with them for the delivering up of the armes of the Countiees to their dispose, and for the disposing of the Forces as there shall be occasion, and to raise Fortifications in all places needfull, and that they shall be allowed the fourth part of the moneys raised there upon the bill for the 400000. l. Subsidies towards the charge of the worke.

A petition was presented to the Commons from the Clerks of the Exchequer, desiring them to settle a courie for the executing of the office of Sherifites in the Countiees of this Kingdome, for that since they have forbidden the Sheriffes appointed by his Majesty to execute their office, they know not to whom to direct any Writs, which is a great

D d

prejudice

*British Museum.*

Front page of an issue of the *Perfect Diurnall* with a wood cut of the House of Commons.

hath a privilege ; and therefore I am come to know if any of those persons that I have accused for no slight crime, but for treason, are here.

‘ I cannot expect that this House can be in the right way that I do heartily wish it, therefore I am come to tell you, that I must have them wheresoever I find them.’

After a pause he turned to the Speaker, demanding whether any of those persons were in the House, and if not where they were. Lenthall, now with perfect control of himself and the situation, fell to his knees as he replied :

‘ May it please your Majesty,

‘ I have neither eyes to see, nor tongue to speak, in this place, but as the House is pleased to direct me, whose servant I am here ; and humbly beg your Majesty’s pardon that I cannot now give any other answer than this, to what your Majesty is pleased to demand of me.’

It was in vain that Charles thereupon assured the House on the word of a King that he did never intend any force, but only to prosecute the transgressors, ‘ in a legal and fair way.’ The armed company waiting on his orders in Westminster Hall beyond was a present denial of his profession. Conscious that this patent insincerity had miscarried, the King returned to his challenging note :

‘ And now, since I see I cannot do what I came for I think this no unfit occasion to repeat what I have said formerly, that whatsoever I have done in favour, and to the good of my subjects, I do mean to maintain

it. I will trouble you no more, but tell you I do expect, as soon as they come to the House, you will send them to me ; otherwise I must take my own course to find them.'

The House had listened without a murmur, and with no movement save that of John Rushworth, the clerk, at his table taking notes ; now as the King, having committed an outrage for which there is no parallel, rose from the Chair and walked towards the door leading into Westminster Hall, the storm broke loose. Cries of ' Privilege ! Privilege ! Privilege ! ' followed him as he went out into the street. They were taken up by the crowd as he passed back on his way to Whitehall. A paper was thrown into his carriage bearing the words of Judah, ' To your tents, O Israel.' From that moment, civil war was inevitable. No further equivocation was possible. In State and church alike it was recognised that a decision had been made. Pym was confirmed in his belief, already expressed to Falkland, that Charles was an evil for which there was but one cure. Dr. Downing, the Vicar of Hackney, preaching in Artillery Gardens, declared plainly that ' For defence of religion and reformation of the Church it was lawful to take up arms against the King.'

Some months of the new year, 1642, were to pass before armed action began. The episcopal debates continued in the House, several bishops entered a protest that during their exclusion from the vote all acts of Parliament were illegal, and ten of them were committed to the Tower on charges of high treason. By this time, however, operation by law as practised

by both parties was becoming something of a farce. Anybody appeared to be ready to lock up anybody else at a moment's notice on any or no pretext. The plain fact was that after a long ordeal which must have broken the endurance of any state, the government of the country was thoroughly out of hand, and this hardly less in Parliament than at the Court. Never perhaps had there been a time when some drastic purgation of a kingdom was more necessary. In the meantime the King, clearly with deliberate design, left London for Hampton Court, and moved thence to Windsor. Effective business at Westminster came almost to a standstill. A certain amount of legislation was passed, stiffening the reforms that had already been effected, but there was little heart in an assembly which realised that the affairs of the nation were on the eve of passing out of administrative hands to a more drastic arbitration. Rumours of plots came and went about the town like bubbles of foam on an angry stream. Suspicion and mistrust brooded over the life of the city. No man felt that he was sure of a day's purchase with his best friend. The strongest fortitude of character was liable to be persuaded from its convictions by the violence that was threatening on every hand. The only public actions that broke in upon the general listlessness of suspense were popular demonstrations in favour of the five members who overnight had become matter for ballads in the streets. Hampden and his friends on their forced retirement from the House had found sanctuary in the city house of a Puritan friend, and there with the aid of the citizens, who were now in no banqueting mood, they had defied the King

when he made a further effort to arrest them. After the formidable scene with Charles in the House, the Commons had moved to committee, sitting for several days in the city halls, the Grocers', the Goldsmiths', and the Merchant Taylors', from which they were in constant communication with the fugitive members.

On January 11th, a week after their departure from Westminster, the exiles returned in triumph. They were, says Whitelock, 'brought from London to Westminster by water, by a great number of citizens, and seamen, in boats and barges, with guns and flags, braving as they passed by Whitehall, and making large protestations at Westminster, of their adherence to Parliament.' All the avenues to the House were guarded by the trained bands who now were in open sympathy with the Country Party. A great deputation of Buckinghamshire men reached London with a petition to the King protesting against the treatment of 'John Hampden, Knight for our Shire, in whose loyalty we, his countrymen and neighbours have ever had good cause to confide.' They made a gallant show as they came into London. There were four thousand of them mounted. In the bands of their hats were stuck copies of the Grand Remonstrance, badges of their faith.

They offered to serve as guards at Westminster, but were civilly told by Parliament, with thanks for their attendance, that the Houses were sufficiently protected by the trained bands of the city. Wishing to place their petition before the King in person, they were advised by the House to send a deputation of ten to Windsor for this purpose. They were well received by the King, who informed them that while he would

much rather that the accused persons should be proved innocent than guilty, the event would show that he had sufficient grounds for the action that he had taken, but in any case they might rest content that the crimes of these men, whatever they might be, could not 'in any sort reflect upon those, his good subjects, who elected them to serve in Parliament.'

On January 20th, the King sent a further message to Parliament in the old strain. They were to digest all the grievances of the kingdom into one body, and he would give his assent to any means that might be found most favourable for redress, and in this he would not only equal, but exceed the most indulgent of princes. Parliament replied with a repeated request for control of the militia and for command of the Tower into the bargain. The King declined to give them either. Parliament signified its dissatisfaction by forcing the Bill for disabling the bishops through the Lords. The King, determined to take no risks, ordered Essex, who was in command of the home armies, to attend him at Windsor. The Earl excused himself on the plea that he had his duties to perform in Parliament. It was the first act of open insubordination by one of the King's officers. Digby, who like Hyde had now made a final severance of his ties with the Puritan party, and was waiting on events at Middlesbrough as a proclaimed traitor, sent letters to the Queen and to Sir Edward Nicholas, the King's new Secretary of State, advising that the King should forthwith 'betake himself to some place of security, where he and others might safely resort to him, and he doubted not but that he should do him acceptable service.' These letters were intercepted by Parliament,

who forthwith sent a message to the King desiring that the Queen should not correspond with Digby or with anyone else whose loyalty to the duly elected council of the country was in question. The incident at once gave rise to a rumour that Parliament intended to impeach the Queen of high treason, and a public denial was issued from Westminster. Too much danger lay behind the scandal, however, to be disregarded. She caused the King to announce to Parliament that she was leaving for Holland with the Princess Royal, who was going to join her husband, the Prince of Orange. Parliament was not for a moment deceived by the equivocation, but before anything could be done the Queen, again with the assistance of Digby, had sailed from Dover. With her she took all the Crown jewels.

This move was capable of only one interpretation. Clearly the Queen's purpose was to enlist what interest she could on the Continent for the King in the contest of which at any moment open declaration must be made. The Crown jewels, it was rightly believed, were to be used in raising funds for this purpose. The question of the militia became the most urgent, indeed almost the only, business before Parliament. It was debated repeatedly, and one demand after another was sent to the King that he should give his assent to the Bill. In vain did Whitelock and others, in speeches of learned eloquence, attempt to find a middle course, asserting that the power of the militia rested neither in the King alone nor in the Parliament but in the King and Parliament consenting together. This was a doctrine that no longer had any contact with realities. The more practical leaders, convinced

that no further satisfaction could be obtained from the King on this or any other matter, proceeded to nominate fit persons to take command of the militia in the several shires. The King, startled by this, sent a message wholly evading the points at issue, and promising church reform. In answer to ugly rumours that he was not so single-minded in his opposition to the Irish rebellion as he professed to be, he displayed a flash of personal courage, in which, as distinct from moral courage, he was never lacking, and offered to go in person to the war in that country. Thereafter for a time exchange of these futilities proceeded daily, until at length Parliament announced that if the King still refused his assent to a bill that had passed both Houses, then Parliament 'for the safety of his Majesty, and of themselves, and of the whole kingdom, and to preserve the peace thereof, and to prevent future fears and jealousies, they shall be constrained of themselves without his Majesty, to settle the necessary business of the militia.' This was on March 1st. Since February 23rd, on which date the Queen had sailed from Dover, where the King had taken leave of her, he had been constantly on the move, passing through Canterbury and Greenwich. He was at Theobalds when the message reached him. He had already sent for his two sons, Charles and James, to join him from Hampton Court. He told Parliament once again that he would have nothing to do with the Bill. The House voted the answer to be unsatisfactory, 'and that the Kingdom be forthwith put into a posture of defence.' The following day a committee was appointed to give effect to this resolution. High in authority among its members was Hampden. On



the same day the King moved north to Royston. For some time still a pretence was maintained that there was contact between himself and Parliament. In reality it had ended. Lord Goring at Portsmouth and Sir John Hotham at Hull were directed by the Committee of Public Safety to hold the magazines in those towns 'for King and Parliament,' and to surrender them to no one without authority from Westminster. This, in the circumstances, amounted to a declaration that the King no longer had any voice in the matter, and everybody knew it. The committee made one last effort to save the situation, but from the first there was no hope of success. The Earls of Pembroke and Holland, who in the past had been among the King's influential friends, were sent to confer with him at Royston. They were to submit the grievances of Parliament, not in the more general terms that had been so frequently stated before, but in respect of events immediately connected with the present crisis. Among these were the conduct of Digby, the impeachment of the five members and 'the suspicious designing of a guard about the King's person.' The King was desired 'to put away his wicked counsellors, to put his trust in Parliament ; which if he would do, they would sacrifice their lives, fortunes and utmost endeavours to the supportation of his Sovereignty.' The messengers backed the petition with a personal appeal that the King should return to London, but it was useless. Charles replied that he had as many and as searching grievances of his own. The charges of the petition were denied categorically. He had no evil counsellors about him, and if they could find any such they were at liberty

to deal with them as they would. The behaviour of the Parliament had thrown the capital into such a state of insecurity that a personal guard was very necessary for his own safety, and the whole substance of their complaint was 'wild and irrational.' Shortly, in the diplomatic language of the time, the King told Parliament to go to the devil.

## IV

On March 7th, the King left Royston for Newmarket, and on the 14th he rested at Huntingdon. From the town, before leaving on the following day for Stamford, he sent a message to Parliament saying that he intended to go into residence at York, and reminding them that any interference that they might attempt with the militia would be treason.

Parliament was provoked by the report that was placed before it by Pembroke and Holland. The messenger from Huntingdon, reaching London a day or two later, inflamed the provocation. It was voted that the King's absence from his proper place, which was the seat of his government, was obstructive to the affairs of the nation, and that all who had advised him in this course must, therefore, be regarded as dangerous to the State. Before leaving Stamford the King issued a decree reserving tonnage and poundage to the arbitrary use of the Crown.

Passing through Grantham, Newark and Doncaster, Charles reached York on March 19th. The assize was being held and the rank and fashion of the Ridings were assembled in the county town. An address extensively signed by the county was presented

to the King, expressing a devoted loyalty and the hope that without delay some expedient might be found to remove all misunderstandings between his Majesty and the Parliament. Charles made a suitable reply, begging them to make representations to Westminster themselves. At the same time he sent another message to the Commons, assuring them for the hundredth time of his benevolent intentions. Of this no notice was taken. Within a few days, however, the exchange of futilities had been resumed. Parliament suspected that the King was designing an attempt on the magazines at Hull. They told him that they proposed to remove the ammunition to London whence it could be more easily applied to service in Ireland. Charles replied that they had his permission to do nothing of the sort. They retorted that they could pay no further attention to his wishes in his absence, and that any commissioners that he might send would not be received. He replied again that he had great respect for their august assembly, but that he had not yet taken leave of his senses, and he did not understand that he had yet been deposed from the throne. He reminded them that they had been called to Westminster for the purpose of giving him counsel and not to act as the jailors of his will, and that he was not in the least intimidated by the circumstance that in their petition about the armaments at Hull they had chosen rather to menace than to advise him. In this contest of ready wit Charles gave at least as good as he got.

Ready wit, however, had by this time lost its edge. The hour of action had arrived. The King noted it. On April 23rd, a day so variously memorable in

English history, he vindicated the suspicions of Parliament by appearing in person before Hull, having failed in a previous attempt to take the town by surprise. Arrived at the city gates, he found them shut, and the bridges drawn. He called upon the governor to admit him, and Sir John Hotham appeared upon the walls, saying that he could not open the gates without breach of his trust to the Parliament. On being required by the King to show his commission, he answered that he could do so only at a personal interview, and that the King had with him too great a company to be allowed entrance. If his Majesty would withdraw his train to a safe distance and return attended only by twenty horse, the governor would allow him to enter and inspect the warrant. Charles in a fury proclaimed Hotham a traitor on the spot, and returned to York. It was in effect the first act of civil war.

The King sent a violent protest to Westminster concerning Hotham's conduct. Parliament replied that it was strictly in accordance with his orders, and that he was rather to be commended than censured for the performance of his duty. Charles was now at bay. He sent another exasperated message to Parliament demanding that the magazine at Hull should be delivered up to him, and he called upon the magistrates of that city to repudiate Hotham. Neither demand met with any response, and Charles sent out scouts to intercept letters passing between Hotham and Westminster. They were detected by agents of the Parliament. The Commons voted the interception a breach of a privilege which they were now prepared to defend 'with their lives and fortunes.'

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They ordered the Sheriffs and Justices of Peace in Yorkshire to suppress any forces that might be raised against Hull, and authorised Hotham to raise the trained bands of the county and to march them with their arms into the city. The King notified the Sheriffs that any such action would be illegal. Hotham, heedless of the threat, marched the bands into Hull according to his warrant, disarmed them, turned them home again, and shut his gates. He had astutely disabled any design that the King might have for pressing them into his own uses. The first score decidedly was with the Parliament. It is a melancholy fact that Hotham, after this heroic entry on the scene of English history, fell to a course of double-dealing that brought him to the scaffold on the findings of a parliamentary court martial in 1645.

A considerable following had gathered round Charles at York, and he made an attempt to take Hull by assault in the hope of avenging his humiliation. Attacks by land and sea were repulsed, and again the King returned to York. His position was precarious in the extreme. He had good reasons for believing that he could count on a large body of personal support, but in the meantime his very slender resources were ill-organised. There seemed to be no hope of replenishing his exchequer except by private bounty, and he had no garrisons. On May 5th, Parliament turned energetically to the business of preparing for the field. They appointed Lieutenants to mobilise the militia throughout the country with power to appoint deputies. Lord Paget was appointed Lieutenant of Buckinghamshire, and first on the list of deputies was John Hampden.

Among those with him were his friend Arthur Goodwin, and Bulstrode Whitelock. The warrants empowered the Lieutenant and his deputies :

‘ To assemble and call together all and singular his Majesty’s subjects, within the said county, as well as within the Liberties as without, that are meant and fit for the wars, and to train them, exercise, and put them in readiness, and after their abilities and faculties well and sufficiently shown, from time to time to cause them to be arrayed and weaponed, and to take the muster of them in places most fit for that purpose . . . and to lead, conduct and employ the persons aforesaid . . . together with their several colonels, captains and officers, for the suppression of all rebellion, insurrections and invasions that may happen within the said county, as within any part of this realm of England or Dominion of Wales . . . as I from time to time shall receive direction from the Lords and Commons assembled in Parliament.’

Within a month Paget had gone over to the King, and his place was taken by Lord Wharton, an enthusiastic champion of the Country Party. They confirmed the appointment of Hampden and the other deputies. The new warrants were dated June 5th.

The Militia Bill had thus been put into operation without the King’s consent. This action together with the royal assault on Hull amounted to an open declaration of hostilities. Fighting on any extensive scale was to be delayed for a few months yet, but active preparations now went forward on both sides. In the meantime, Parliament continued to make

approaches to the King. Indeed, throughout the period of the war the more moderate men on both sides persevered in efforts to effect a compromise that would be acceptable to all parties. On June 2nd, Parliament sent to the King 'A humble petition and advice' in nineteen propositions. It covered familiar ground, and was rejected. As late as July 11th, Whitelock, in face of a message from the King that he intended a further assault upon Hull if the city did not capitulate, while he was now determined against 'a tame resignation of our religion, lives and liberties into the hands of our adversaries, who seek to devour us,' drew a vivid and touching picture in the Commons of the horrors of civil war, and still implored that further efforts should be made to spare the country from disaster. 'We have tried by proposals of peace to his Majesty and they have been rejected: Let us try yet again, [let us spare no] endeavours to prevent the miseries which look back upon us, and to settle a good accommodation; so that there may be no strife between us, and those of the other party, for we are brethren.' The House listened respectfully to Whitelock's plea. Most of the members, indeed, were deeply conscious of its gravity. But they voted that an army should be raised for the defence of Parliament—for the defence of King and Parliament was the fiction still—and that the Earl of Essex should be appointed Commander-in-Chief with the Earl of Bedford as General of the Horse. The King having issued Commissions of Array from York to all parts of the country, calling upon his loving subjects to rally to the defence of his throne, their liberties, and the peace of the land,

moved to Leicester and thence to Nottingham. General sentences of outlawry were passed on both sides. The King's commissioners were declared by Parliament to be traitors, and Essex, with all his subordinate officers, by the King. On August 12th, Charles published a manifesto in censure of Parliament, and in justification of his own conduct. This document was an effectively drawn piece of campaigning rhetoric, but it threw no fresh light on the argument. It revealed, however, one very significant element in the situation. Under the King's signature appeared those of some forty peers and a large number of substantial gentry. Among the former were Richmond, Huntingdon, Bath, Southampton, Dorset, Salisbury, Devonshire, Bristol, Westmorland and Newcastle. However derelict the King's cause might be in Parliament, it was clear that in arms he was to be supported by many of the most powerful influences in the country.

From these sources the King was furnished with a considerable supply of money, which was handsomely augmented by part of the proceeds from sale of the Crown jewels, which had been effected by the Queen. The universities and some of the corporations sent in gifts of plate to the Royalist headquarters. The attention of Parliament, too, was fixed on the problem of financial supply. Here again many private persons were liberal in assistance, the public revenue, such as it was, was now controlled by the Commons, and the principal magazines in the country were in the hands of their agents. A general appeal, but directed particularly to the city of London, was made for horse, money, and plate. The King declared this to be illegal and threatened the Mayor,



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Aldermen and Sheriffs with punishments, which, however, as they very well knew, it was beyond his power to inflict. The city responded lavishly to the appeal of Parliament. The corporation made heavy inroads on its coffers in the effort, the merchants gave freely of their wealth, and even the poor people poured their little possessions into the public treasury. Women who had nothing else to give brought in their wedding rings, even their thimbles and bodkins. Within a few days it was estimated that London Middlesex and Essex alone had subscribed over eleven million pounds to assist the House in preparing an army for the field. And those gifts in kind were supplemented by enthusiastic offers of personal service. On the 26th of July, when the Earl of Essex attended at Moor Fields to receive enlistments, five thousand men presented themselves. They were placed under officers and drafted to various county bodies of militia for training. Immediate steps were taken by Parliament for strategic distribution of its forces.

Charles summoned his subjects, from an area covering all the country north of the Trent and twenty miles south of it, to rise in his defence against the rebels who were concentrating in armed power against their King. The response was disappointing, but there was now no holding back. On August 27th, the royal standard was set up at Nottingham. The occasion was one of great consequence, but it had far less heart in it than had been fondly anticipated. Clarendon gives a dismal picture of the historic moment :

‘ The standard was erected, about six of the clock in the evening of a very stormy and tempestuous day.

The King himself, with a small train, rode to the top of the castle-hill, Verney the Knight Marshal, who was standard-bearer, carrying the standard, which was then erected in that place, with little other ceremony than the sound of drums and trumpets. Melancholic men observed many ill presages about that time. There was not one regiment of foot yet levied and brought thither ; so that the train-bands, which the shrieve had drawn thither, was all the strength the King had for his person and the guard of the standard. There appeared no conflux of men in obedience to the proclamation ; the arms and ammunition were not yet come from York, and a general sadness covered the whole town, and the King himself appeared more melancholic than he used to be. The standard itself was blown down the same night it had been set up, by a very strong and unruly wind, and could not be fixed again in a day or two till the tempest was allayed.'

Messages still continued to pass between Parliament and what had become a nomadic Court, but further hopes of saving the country from bloodshed were entertained by no one. The war had begun, and from this moment political deliberation at Westminster and elsewhere receded into the background. The minds of countless Englishmen who had reached their middle years in peaceable pursuits were suddenly turned to the study of ordnance and supply and strategy and tactics. In a sense beyond all previous experience, the nation was in arms.

The writer of this narrative was once shown a strangely tragic relic. It was a sword that had

belonged to a young gentleman who as a subaltern in the Presbyterian forces was one night guarding the outhouses of his family estates in the midlands. He and the little detachment of men under his command were disturbed by the sudden arrival of a small hostile force. A skirmish took place in the dark, and the young man found himself engaged hand to hand with a rival subaltern whom he killed. The invaders were driven off, and then by the light of a lantern the unfortunate boy discovered that he had driven his sword through the body of his own brother.

In a war that not only split up every shire into factions, but also divided one corner of the village street against another, and even set members of the same family at bitter feud, it is difficult to the point of impossibility to define precisely the distribution of interests in the country. If the King was strong in one quarter, there also would be powerful opposition against which the most constant vigilance was hardly a security ; and in the districts where most the Puritan power was in ascendancy, strong local influences would be operating for the King. Roughly speaking, however, it may be said that the interest of the King lay with the older nobility, the universities, and a large miscellaneous collection of adventurers, some of them reputable, and some not. Many of the King's friends remained with him, not in any nice calculation of the cause in dispute, but merely because he was the King. Such a one was Sir Edmund Verney, the King's standard-bearer, who told Clarendon :

‘ You have satisfaction in your conscience that you are in the right, that the King ought not to grant

what is required of him ; and so you do your duty and business together. But, for my part, I do not like the quarrel, and do heartily wish that the King would yield, and consent to what they desire, so that my conscience is only concerned in honour and gratitude to follow my master. I have eaten his bread and served him near thirty years, and will not do so base a thing as to forsake him, and choose rather to lose my life—which I am sure I shall do—to preserve and defend those things which are against my conscience to preserve and defend ; for I will deal freely with you. I have no reverence for bishops, for whom this quarrel subsists.’

The Puritan interest, on the other hand, was with the middle classes in general, including the lower ranks of the landed gentry, the merchants and shopkeepers, and the City of London. The yeoman peasantry, while they largely took their colour from the local landowners, were on the whole more sympathetically inclined towards the Parliament than towards the King.

Finally, there was what was to prove the invaluable support of the Scots. In spite of all the assurances that had marked the occasion of the King’s visit to Edinburgh, the northern power once it was convinced, after the early events of 1642, that the cat was decidedly about to jump in a direction favourable to Parliament, repudiated its undertakings to Charles and was frankly Puritan in its intention. It is true that Presbyterianism at this crisis was influenced entirely by self-interest, but then there was no reason why it should not be. It believed that it saw an

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opportunity of bringing English church practice into conformity with its own, and resolved to take it.

Territorially the King's power was mostly to be found north and west of a line drawn approximately from Hull to Plymouth. As Gardiner points out, this meant that all the rich trading and agricultural districts of the east, the home counties, and the south, were for the Parliament, while Charles had to be content with the poorer and more thinly populated parts of a country which then knew nothing of our modern industrial development. Before the end of the war the whole of England was virtually under the control of the parliamentary troops, but in 1642, when Charles made his declaration at Nottingham, this in general terms was the condition of affairs. Wales, which could exert little influence one way or the other remained Royalist to the end, and even in the days of his adversity the King continued to make some progress into the south-west from his stronghold in Cornwall. Never at any time, however, did he make any impression on the far more important strategic and economic centres in the midlands, the home shires, the counties of the Eastern Association, and the south coast. Above all, he never for a moment regained effective touch with the capital.

To follow the course of the Civil War in all its campaigns up to the date of Hampden's death would be beyond the scope of this study. An attempt has been made to show the condition of English thought and political sentiment at the time when the Civil War broke out, and the issues upon which the cleavage between the two great parties slowly but inexorably asserted itself. The figure of John Hampden has

been kept steadily in mind as representing the leadership of one of these parties in its most moderate, its most honourable, and its most intrepid aspect. It will be our purpose to consider those events of the war in which he personally was concerned. He had striven as earnestly as any man to avert the calamity which had befallen the country. Suffering much for his faith, he had never allowed himself to become embittered, and up to the last moment, in the weary and wrangling debates at Westminster in 1642, he had steadfastly given his support to any proposals that might make for peace. He was now forty-eight years of age, and there was nothing for which his natural disposition inclined him less than the follies of war. Notable always for his energy and enterprise, and for proved courage in many emergencies, he nevertheless desired nothing so much as a life of quiet benevolence in the retirement of his country estate. Ardent in his exercises, he had kept himself eager and physically taut, but all his inclination was to employ an active middle age in the country pursuits in which he so much delighted. But now, when the last argument was over, and the decision had been made, his friends noticed in him a change. It was as though he had put the world behind him in the service of his fate, and there was a new note of fierceness in his dedication. It was Clarendon who said of him that once he had drawn the sword he threw away the scabbard.



*[Photo by Edmund S. Garrod.]*

THE HAMPDEN STATUE AT AYLESBURY.

## CHAPTER VI

### EARLY MOVEMENTS OF THE WAR. EDGEHILL

#### I

THE hour was further darkened for Hampden by domestic calamity. In the first year of the Civil War, he lost his eldest son, and his favourite daughter, Elizabeth Knightley. If the *Mercurius Aulicus*, the Court Intelligencer published at Oxford, is to be trusted, this was not the sum of his private griefs. On April 15th that paper wrote : ‘ It is advertised by some who have been curious in the observation that Mr. Hampden, one of the five members so much talked of, hath had many great misfortunes since the beginning of the present troubles, whereof he hath been a principal mover : particularly that he hath buried since that time two of his daughters, one grandchild which he had by a daughter married to Sir Rob. Pye the younger, and his own eldest son and heir : there being only two sons surviving, whereof the one is said to be a Cripple, and the other a Lunatick. Of which, whatever use may be made by others, ’tis not unfit that the party whom it most concerns would lay it close unto his heart, and make such use thereof, as the sad case invites him to.’ Few men have loved life and its graces more than Hampden, and few have had reason to spend the



last years of it in deeper gloom. He turned from his public and private griefs to the consolation or the anodyne of an intense activity. The close of his career, as was noted by Nugent, affords a curious parallel to that of Falkland with whose character his own had so much in common. Both men were devoted patriots, with an entirely disinterested love of their country, and both were men of great personal charm and noble disposition. It was one of the ironies of the political occasion that when war came they should have been found in opposing camps. Falkland after many misgivings had finally attached himself to the King, had accepted the Secretaryship of State in January, 1642, and thereafter until his death was constantly in the royal counsels. He no less than Hampden was desolated at the approach of war, but once it had been undertaken he was as active in furthering its prosecution for the King as Hampden was for the Parliament. And like Hampden, in spite of his eager activity, he was haunted by the misery of it all. 'From the entrance into this unnatural war,' says Clarendon, 'his natural cheerfulness and vivacity grew clouded, and a kind of sadness and dejection of spirit stole upon him, which he had never been used to. . . . When there was any overture or hope of peace, he would be more erect and vigorous, and exceedingly solicitous to press any thing which he thought might promote it, and sitting amongst his friends often, after a deep silence and frequent sighs, would, with a shrill and sad accent, ingeminate the word Peace, Peace, and would passionately profess that the very agony of the war, and the view of the calamities and desolation

the Kingdom did and must endure, took his sleep from him and would shortly break his heart.' Fearful, Clarendon tells us, that this melancholy would reflect in the opinion of men upon his personal courage, he became so reckless of his own safety that more than once his friends had to expostulate with him for needlessly exposing himself to danger in action. At Newbury he insisted on taking a place in the first line of attack, and was killed. 'Thus,' says Clarendon, 'fell that incomparable young man, in the four and thirtieth year of his age, having so much despatched the business of life that the oldest rarely attain to that immense knowledge, and the youngest enter not into the world with more innocence.' Such resolution, such eager searching for peace, such melancholy, and such indifference to his own preservation, marked also the closing days of Hampden's life. If the fate of any individual can be said to matter when the fortunes of a nation are at stake, it was one of the greater personal tragedies of the Civil War that these men should have been killed in 1643, before any recovery had been made from the first passionate onset and reconciliation could again be discussed. Nugent's summary of the matter is marked by his usual sagacity: 'In the wisdom and influence of these two men lay the best hope of such a settlement, which, to be permanent, must have been matter of compromise, and which, to become matter of compromise, must have been founded upon great power of dictation, placed in prudent hands like theirs.'

At large the grisly tale of recrimination went on. There was now hardly a man of any consequence in the country whom somebody or another had not

branded as a traitor. Paying no further attention to a dialectic that had become farcical, Hampden applied himself to the active prosecution of his duties as a Buckinghamshire deputy. In his own Chiltern country, he issued the ordinance calling upon his neighbours, rich and poor alike, to report themselves for service. No apology is needed for borrowing another passage from Nugent, the quality of which is very much worth recovering after a hundred years of neglect.

‘ It was under the woody brows of his own beauteous Chilterns that Hampden first published his ordinance to marshal the militia of his native country. The parishes and hundred, often with their preachers at the head, mustered at their market-houses to march forth to training. In the dearth of all the ordinary implements of war, arms and accoutrements of the most grotesque fashion now left the walls where, from the times of the civil wars of the two Roses, they had hung as hereditary trophies in the manor-houses, the churches and the cottages of the yeomen. In the returns of arms, particularly of the levies of the northern parts, at the first outbreak, the long-bow, the brown bill, and the cross-bow, resumed their place among the equipments of a man-at-arms. It was not till some months after, when the stores of Hull, and Newcastle, and Plymouth, and of the Tower of London, were distributed, that the match-lock and pistol found their way into the hands of the “ ordered musqueteers and dragooners ” in the country parts ; and, even to the end of the civil wars, large bodies of men, besides the regular pikemen, were furnished only with rude

lances ; and, on the King's part, many thousands, particularly of the Welshmen, went to the battle with staves and Danish clubs.'

In my bibliographical note, I have, I hope, paid due tribute to Lord Nugent's book on *John Hampden His Party and His Times*. That nobleman's shade may perhaps not think it amiss of me if, to my own purposes, and in tribute to his illustrious and now it is to be feared almost entirely forgotten labours, I annex yet another passage of spacious and well-limbered prose.

' Once aroused to the fearful necessity of taking arms, and of using them, the principal leaders of the Puritans were rapid, resolute, and unwearied, in all the various business of the approaching war. They had matured their secret and sturdy plan, and now worked with an energy which at first was wanting among the greater part of the adherents to the Royalist cause. They had added to their rigid morals a noble and simple vigour ;—" They had put on," says Sidney, " the athletic habit of liberty for the contest ; " —they had made the laws of God the study of their lives ;—they found them often in conflict with those of their rulers ;—they made their choice, and solemnly appealed to the issue of battle, as men who thoroughly believed themselves especially designed, in the words of Milton,

*To some great work, His glory,  
And people's safety—*

And many who had before looked with doubt and fear upon the very name of liberty, now made proclamation of it with their lips, inscribed it, and " God with Us," upon their banners, to challenge lawless prerogative ;

and, having drawn their swords in it's behalf, sheathed them not, until they had made what long had been a bye-word and a grievous jest, their leading cry to victory.'

For several weeks after the beginning of the war in August, the King's organisation was far less efficient than that of his adversaries. His commissioners of array were everywhere obstructed by parliamentary agents, and he had no properly constituted headquarters from which to direct operations. Leaving Nottingham early in September, he marched more or less aimlessly about the midlands, and depended for recruits almost entirely upon the exercise of his personal influence in the places through which he passed. In the meantime, there was some concentration of strength in his support in the neighbourhood of Shrewsbury, where among others a large number of undisciplined but enthusiastic Welshmen were waiting to join him. The raising of parliamentary troops, on the other hand, went forward rapidly and efficiently. Some time before the King had been able to gather the scattered elements of his strength into an effective unit, Essex was in command of a well-drilled, well-disciplined, and well-officered army of something like twenty thousand men. From the first, Robert Devereux, third Earl of Essex, displayed the qualities and defects that had consistently marked his conduct as Commander-in-Chief when shortly before his death in 1646 he was turned out by Cromwell. He was brave, an able commander in the field, and was popular with the ranks, by whom he was affectionately known as Old Robin. On the other hand,

away from the field of battle, he was uncertain in his policy, and lethargic in his designs. Once in action he displayed all the better parts of his experience and character, but in the larger strategy of the war he was never able to take a constructive view of the situation as a whole. He lacked vision as a statesman and enterprise as a soldier, and it was afterwards urged against him, not without reason, that had he been more vigorous in his movements against the King in the first weeks of the war, he might have brought it to an immediate conclusion. It is certain that until the date of Edgehill at the end of October, 1642, Charles would have been unable to stand a well-directed and determined attack by the forces which Essex had at his disposal. This defect in the highest command was a constant source of irritation and even sometimes almost of despair to men like Hampden who in subordinate commands had a much larger conception than their chief of the political issue, and a much more resolute campaigning ardour.

Considering the fact that they were for the most part organised by men of no previous military experience, the county regiments of Parliament were mobilised with astonishing rapidity. It was for Cromwell's genius at a later date to devise the Ironside uniform, and at first the regiments wore the distinguishing colours of their leaders. Holles raised the London Red Coats, and Lord Brooke in Warwickshire the Purple, Lord Saye and Sele in the same county commanded the men in Blue, and Hampden became Colonel of the Green Coats of Buckingham. On the standard at the head of the regiment was Hampden's own crest and motto *Vestigia nulla retrorsum*—No looking

back. In the colour of the General's household all the parliamentary officers tied orange scarves across their armour. Before the summer of 1642 had gone out Essex had under his command twenty regiments of infantry and seventy-five troops of cavalry. Among the commanders' names were Lord Kimbolton, Sir William Fairfax, Denzil Holles, Arthur Haslerig, Henry Ireton, Robert Pye (Hampden's son-in-law), and Oliver Cromwell ; also there were Hercules Langrishe, William Pretty and Faithful Fortescue. It is to be noted, on the other hand, that with the King was a gentleman named Sir Lewis Dives.

## II

Closely associated with Hampden's Green Coat infantry was a regiment of horse raised by his friend Arthur Goodwin in the same county. Their first active service took them into Oxfordshire, where the Earl of Berkshire and others as King's commissioners were endeavouring to execute the royal array. Whitelock, as one of the Buckinghamshire deputies, was ordered by Parliament to stop these proceedings. Having received information that the royal commissioners were to sit at Watlington on an appointed day to enrol recruits, he marched into that town with the Buckinghamshire foot and horse led by Hampden and Goodwin, only to find that the commissioners, warned of their approach, had left. Whitelock and his friends pursued them to Sir Robert Dormer's house at Ascot, where after a short resistance the commissioners surrendered, Berkshire being sent a

prisoner to London. It was a small affair for the Buckingham Green Coats, but it was a competent beginning.

Thenceforward they were constantly employed. Leaving Ascot, Hampden took them back through Oxford and Banbury, where the royal commissioners were in possession under arms. In conjunction with Lord Saye he made preparations for a siege which were interrupted by the flight of the commissioners. Hampden returned further to establish the business of his own array in Buckinghamshire and the near districts of Oxfordshire. One of his mustering grounds was Chalgrove Field.

Hampden in the meantime was active not only with his soldiers. He was largely instrumental in raising a subscription of £30,000 from his shire for the public service, putting his own name down for two sums of a thousand pounds each. Also he kept in touch with Parliament. Before leaving Nottingham the King made fresh overtures for a treaty, but Hampden, finally persuaded that there was no sincerity in royal professions, shrewdly suspected the King's proposal of being nothing but a pretext to gain time for his military preparations, which it was, and strongly counselled its rejection. In Hampden's opinion the only thing to be done at that moment was to strike and strike quickly, and it was then that his impatience with Essex began to assert itself. With great firmness, however, he kept it under control. Essex was now his commander in the field, and discipline had to be maintained. Had Hampden lived there is little doubt that he would have joined or even led Cromwell in the demand for the General's



removal, but at present he had to be discreet about his misgivings.

As the King left Nottingham, there was a concentration of the parliamentary forces at Northampton. Essex marched out of London at the head of the trained bands and militia of the home counties, attended for several miles along the Barnet road by the City Companies and members of the Lords and Commons. Great crowds assembled to cry him God-speed as he went out on his crusade. At Northampton he was met by regiments from the country shires, Hampden with his Buckinghamshire men among them. The move was a bold one, and in it may be seen Hampden's influence. Northamptonshire was the most powerful centre of the King's interest in the country, and Lord Northampton himself was a Royalist of great character and energy. The county town, however, was largely Puritan in sympathy, and the arrival of the parliamentary army completely disorganised the King's interests throughout the shire. Charles marching westward from Nottingham had to leave Northampton to his enemies, and went forward with the purpose of taking Coventry and Warwick. With the King was Lord Northampton himself, a fugitive from his own county. As Recorder of the town he associated himself with the royal demand for entrance into Coventry. The inhabitants, wearing favours of Lord Brooke's Warwickshire Purple, sent a message through the Mayor that while they would be dutifully pleased to receive his Majesty, they were by no means willing to admit his troops. Northampton went through the town trying to assert his authority for the King, and was lucky to escape with his life through the back door

of a public house. Charles thereupon brought up his battering gear and put Coventry under siege. The citizens, with no trained soldiers, hardly any material or munitions, conducted a heroic defence of their unfortified town. They barricaded the streets, and with such arms as they could raise they even made sorties through the broken gates of the city, on one occasion capturing some of the King's guns, which they turned in triumph on the besiegers. This sort of thing could not last, however, and Coventry must have fallen had it not been for the arrival of news that a relief party was approaching the town. Lord Brooke and Lord Saye with Holles and Hampden were reported to be with their regiments on the Northampton road, and the King, unwilling to face an open action, raised the siege and made his way to Leicester. This was in August, 1642. On the 29th, Hampden was engaged in an action with Northampton when that nobleman was taken prisoner.

Robert Greville, second Baron Brooke, stood high among the young Puritan leaders. Fifteen years younger than Hampden, he had been born within a few months of Lucius Cary, and had been adopted by his cousin the great Sir Fulke Greville, who had been a pall bearer at Philip Sidney's funeral. In this connection he inherited Warwick Castle, and shortly before the siege of Coventry a Royalist force had demanded the surrender of that fortress to the King. He was also to deliver up the magazine of the county and foreswear his allegiance to Parliament. The Royalist commanders, Northampton among them, informed him that failure to comply with his demands would result in exemplary punishment, but that the

King's favour would reward his acquiescence and pardon his past misdeeds. These negotiations took place at a parley in a field outside the town. As Brooke listened to the terms with which he was insulted, he sat speechless on his horse. Having heard them to the end, he turned with the apparent intention of riding away in silence. Thinking better of it, he suddenly wheeled his horse again and spoke. He reproached them with the betrayal of the Parliament in which they had sat as honoured members, and added that in their defection they had betrayed the King also. 'When that his Majesty, his posterity, and the peace of the kingdom shall be secured from you, I gladly shall lay down my arms and power.' As for the Castle and magazine, he held them in trust for Parliament and should do so until Northampton could show him authority for their delivery. As he was conscious of no offence against his Majesty, so he could stand in no need of the royal pardon, and then, 'as for your fury, I wholly disdain it ; and answer it but by hoping that Northampton may be translated to Warwick, to stand sentry upon Warwick Castle, and to fright the crows and kites.'

During these early movements in the midlands, Brooke and Hampden were in close co-operation. After the affair at Coventry, they met at Southam, a little town in Warwickshire, and there quartered their army, numbering six thousand infantry and three hundred horse, for the night. In the early hours of the morning news came in from the outposts that Northampton with his army, which was returning towards the east, was within two miles of the town. There was an immediate call to arms, and as the

Warwickshire Purple and Buckinghamshire Green assembled in the street to the sound of drums and the light of torches, the Puritans, hardened now with half a summer's service, 'gave a great shout, with flinging up of their hats and clattering their arms, till the town rang again with the sound thereof, and, casting aside all desires of meat and lodging provided for them went immediately into the fields adjoining to the town, ready for battle.' As day broke they found Northampton's men drawn up before them, and at eight o'clock Hampden led the first charge under cover of nine guns supported by Goodwin's Horse. The Royalists, though greatly superior in numbers, were driven from the field. The success, though but a small one, was emphatic. The rout was witnessed by the King, accompanied by his nephew Prince Rupert, who at the age of twenty-three was about to be given command of the royal cavalry.

During September, 1642, the whole country was a scene of military activity, manœuvring towards some real trial of strength. In the north-west and the south-west the King's cause made some progress. Sir Thomas Fairfax, raising a parliamentary force in Yorkshire, did much to check the powerful influences of the Earls of Newcastle and Derby, who were operating for the King in the north. The eastern and south-eastern counties were securely held by Parliament beyond reach of any Royalist enterprise. For the time being, the midlands remained the most important centre of activity. It was here that the rival powers were most closely in touch, and the strategy of the first campaign began to be governed by the purpose now formed by the King of marching

on London, with the support of Derby and Newcastle coming south from Lancashire and Cheshire. Parliament prepared the defences of the capital, erecting batteries and putting bars across the principal streets, and raising defences on the northern heights of Hampstead, Highgate and Harrow. 'It was,' says Whitelock, 'wonderful to see how the women and children, and vast numbers of people would come to work about digging, and carrying of earth to make their new fortifications.' And in order to show that they were a Parliament still, they passed their Root and Branch Bill for the abolition of the episcopacy.

The military situation was a curious one. Week after week passed as two considerable armies in the circumscribed space of a few English counties contrived to avoid each other. At least Charles contrived to avoid Essex, and it must be allowed that Essex was very casual in pursuit. One might have supposed that he was encountering the difficulties of Nelson searching for the French on the wide expanses of the seven seas. A certain amount of skirmishing took place, and heroic defences were made by small communities, sometimes by single households as at Caldecot Manor in Warwickshire, where Mrs. Purefoy with three members of her family and a few servants for several hours defied Rupert with a force of five hundred cavalry. In the middle of December, however, Essex made a move, marching to occupy Worcester. Rupert sent him an astonishing proposal that a kind of tournament should be held between the two armies on Dunsmore Heath, which was a field admirably suited to the Prince's resources. Essex, probably under the impression that the royal nephew

was not quite right in his head, declined the invitation. He moved on to Worcester. While he was marching to join Essex in this enterprise Hampden and his men were engaged in a further small action of some importance. The Buckinghamshire county magazine at Aylesbury was threatened by the Royalists, and Hampden was ordered to take charge of the town. On September 16th, he and Denzil Holles defeated a Cavalier company, and made several prisoners who were lodged in the jails at Buckingham and High Wycombe. Marching from this success to Oxford, they drove Lord Byron, the Royalist governor, out of the city and pursued him to Evesham, where they scored another skirmishing success, then rejoining Essex as he entered Worcester.

While he was in that city the Commander-in-Chief issued a remarkable address to his troops. In a preamble he stated that in the sight of Almighty God he would undertake nothing but what should tend to the advancement of liberty in all its aspects ; that he would engage none of them in any danger in which he would not in his own person run an equal hazard ; that he would be as accessible to the poorest of his soldiers as to the chief of his officers ; that they should be paid regularly and that he should expect his commanders to discipline their men ' by love and affable carriage.' He then specified his orders in eight clauses :

' 1. That you willingly and cheerfully obey such as by your own election you have made commanders over you.

' 2. That you take special care to keep your arms

at all times fit for service, that upon all occasions you may be ready, when the signal shall be given by the sound of drum or trumpet, to repair to your colours, and so to march upon any service, where and when occasion shall require.

‘3. That you bear yourselves like soldiers, without doing any spoil to the inhabitants of the country ; so doing you shall obtain love and friendship, where, otherwise, you will be hated and complained of, and I, that should protect you, shall be forced to punish you according to the severity of the law.

‘4. That you accept, and rest satisfied with, such quarters as shall fall to your lot, or be appointed you by your quarter-master.

‘5. That you shall, if appointed for sentries or perdues, faithfully discharge that duty ; for, upon fail hereof, you shall be sure to undergo a very severe censure.

‘6. You shall forbear to profane the sabbath, either by being drunk, or by unlawful games ; for whosoever shall be found faulty must not expect to pass unpunished.

‘7. Whosoever shall be known to neglect the feeding of his horse with necessary provender, to the end that his horse be disabled or unfit for service, the party for the said default shall suffer a month’s imprisonment, and afterwards be cashiered, as unworthy the name of a soldier.

‘8. That no trooper, or other of our soldiers, shall suffer his paddee to feed his horse in the corn, or to steal a man’s hay, but shall pay, every man, for hay 6d. day and night, and for oats 2s. the bushel.

‘Lastly, that you avoid cruelty. For it is my desire

rather to save the lives of thousands than to kill one ; so that it may be done without prejudice. These things faithfully performed, and the justice of our cause truly considered, let us advance with a religious courage, and willingly adventure our lives in the defence of the king and Parliament.'

On the 22nd of September an action that was called at the time the Battle of Worcester, but was in fact no more than a skirmish at Powick Bridge that crosses the river Thame some four miles from the city, was celebrated by both sides as a victory, although there is good evidence to show that the Puritans in their claims were making the best of a poor job. Young Edmund Ludlow, who was to play an important part in the affairs of the Commonwealth, was present at the action with Essex, being a recruit in his bodyguard. In his *Memoirs* he makes an appealing confession of failure. The bridge was held by Rupert in force when it was attacked by the parliamentarians, who were severely repulsed, 'though they did as much as could well be expected from them upon so disadvantageous a ground.' Ludlow proceeds :

'The body of our routed party returned in great disorder to Parshot, at which place our Life-Guard was appointed to quarter that night ; where as we were marching into the town, we discovered horsemen riding very hard towards us with drawn swords, and many of them without hats, from whom we understood the particulars of our loss, not without improvement, by reason of the fear with which they were possessed, telling us, that the enemy was hard by in pursuit of



them : where, as it afterwards appeared, they came not within four miles of that place. Our Life-Guard being for the most part strangers to things of this nature, were much alarmed with this report ; yet some of us unwilling to give credit to it till we were better informed, offered ourselves to go out upon a further discovery of the matter. But our captain Sir Philip Stapylton not being then with us, his Lieutenant one Bainham, an old soldier (a generation of men much cried up at that time) drawing us into a field, where he pretended we might more advantageously charge if there should be occasion, commanded us to wheel about ; but our gentlemen not yet well understanding the difference between wheeling about, and shifting for themselves, their backs being now towards the enemy, whom they thought to be close in the rear, retired to the arm in a very dishonourable manner, and the next morning rallied at the head-quarters, where we received but cold welcome from the general, as we well deserved.'

## III

Hampden's life, busy as it had been, was now crowded with incident as never before. Active in the affairs of his country, leading his regiment in person through these preliminary operations in the field, he continued still to make opportunities for visits to Westminster. The political conduct of affairs was indeed by this time thoroughly dishevelled, but spasmodic efforts were still being made to exert its influence. At one moment Westminster was declining to listen to overtures from the King, and

at another it was itself making approaches through Essex, to be informed curtly that 'His Majesty would receive any petition that should be presented to him from his Parliament and give free access to those that should bring the same ; but that he would not receive any petition from the hands of any traitor.' Which, as Parliament pointed out, meant that no further communication with his Majesty was possible since his ban lay not only upon Essex, but upon his adherents, among whom were included the members of the Houses which had appointed him to his command.

The reverse which Essex had sustained at Powick Bridge, though provoking in itself, was of no great consequence. Far more serious was the discovery that while he had been engaged in establishing Worcester for the Parliament the King had succeeded in manœuvring his main army to a point south of the city, a day's march on the road to London. Parliament naturally was greatly agitated by the news. Not only was there no adequate defence, in default of Essex, to meet the threat to the capital ; it was certain that on his progress, Charles would attract to his banner many recruits of Royalist sympathies who had been kept inactive by the hitherto unchallenged Puritan supremacy in the home counties. Cavalier strategy had suddenly achieved a wholly unexpected success. The King's army intact and on the march between Lord Essex and London was an extremely alarming contingency which nobody at Westminster had foreseen. Until it had actually arisen, no one had supposed it to be possible. Messengers on the fleetest horses that could

be found were dispatched at a moment's notice to Essex, that at all costs he must by forced marches bring the King to action. At the same time the deputies of the home counties received urgent instructions to impede the King's progress in every way possible. Essex suddenly realising that he was on the brink of irreparable disaster, set out for Worcester with unwonted dispatch, in pursuit of the royal army.

On October 18th Hampden and Brooke entered Stratford-on-Avon, and drove a Royalist force from possession of the bridge. The King, however, had crossed the Avon to the north of Stratford, passing through Southam, and on the 20th the outposts were at Banbury. By the 22nd his main army had reached the neighbourhood of Edgehill, and towards midnight Rupert watching from the brow of Sunrising saw lights moving in the Vale of the Red Horse. He was unable to account for these, but at daybreak their meaning was revealed. Essex was discovered in full formation outside the little town of Kineton some two miles distant. Charles was about to follow his outposts towards Banbury, when the news reached him. He at once occupied the upper slopes and crest of the hill in full array, facing the enemy. On this gray October Sunday morning, there was a feeling of surprise in both armies, as suddenly they found themselves face to face at striking distance. Essex had roused himself to some purpose, but although, being in a friendly county, he was more mobile than the King, he had by no means expected so rapidly to come up with the object of his pursuit. Nor had Charles expected that his progress towards London would be so speedily arrested.

In the early hours of the morning, there was an astonished pause in both camps before they bestirred themselves to prepare for action. It has been generally computed that the strength of each army was about fourteen thousand men. The King had the advantage in cavalry, both as to numbers and in the proportion of troopers who all their lives had been accustomed to the saddle. On the other hand, the Puritans were better equipped, and their foot-men had undergone a much more careful training than the King's. In the royal army there was a strong infusion of mercenaries who had seen service abroad, and soldiers of fortune who were persuaded that they could decide the issue of any battle that was to be fought chiefly by untried levies. This conviction they succeeded in imparting to the Cavaliers at large, and the Royalist army awaited the battle with a misplaced confidence that was not unmingled with contempt. They were reckoning without the disciplined resolution by which they were opposed.

The conduct of the Civil War in England was not unblemished by outrages, but they were infrequent, and seldom if ever committed by the main army. Rupert alone among the high commands seems to have committed offences that exclude him from this honourable character. The orders of Essex to his troops at Worcester set a standard from which the Puritans seldom departed, and the responsible Cavalier leaders were not less exacting. 'And therefore,' says Clarendon, 'where the army rested a day they found much better entertainment at parting than when they came; for it will not be denied that there was no person of honour or quality

who paid not punctually and exactly for what they had ; and there was not the least violence or disorder amongst the common soldiers in their march which escaped exemplary punishment ; so that at Bromigham, a town so generally wicked that it had risen upon small parties of the King's, and killed or taken them prisoners and sent them to Coventry, declaring a more peremptory malice to his Majesty than any other place, two soldiers were executed for having taken some trifle of no value out of a house whose owner was at that time in the rebels' army.' It is high testimony to the character of Englishmen that in this conflict where internal feud seldom failed to intensify the bitterness of any action in the field, unauthorised licence and malignancy were rare.

The spirit by which the Puritan troops were inspired has been a constant theme of this story, but although it was less prevalent among the Cavaliers, it furnished them also with many examples of pure and pious devotion. At Edgehill there were many Brookes of Warwick in the Puritan field, but among the Cavaliers there were not a few Jacob Astleys. Addressing his men in Purple, recruited from the heart of his beloved midlands, the young Puritan commander said, in words that echoed the great poet who had then been dead twenty-five years : ' Persuasions to valiant men, as I know you to be, are useless ; and if I thought there were any of you that was not to be incited more by the justice of the quarrel than any oratory to fight in this cause, surely I would rather wish his room than his company.' He then made a shrewd thrust at the mercenaries who with long records in the German wars had offered their

services on terms. Thanking them, he nevertheless asked leave to be plain. Their valour he did not question, but he had no liking for their motives. 'Merely money it was, and hope of gain, that excited the soldier to that service. It is not there so required, as the cause stands with us . . . I had rather have a thousand honest citizens that can handle their arms, whose hearts go with their hands, than thousands of mercenary soldiers that boast of their foreign service.' And in conclusion: 'Therefore, O Lord fight thou our battles . . . and strengthen and give us hearts, that we may show ourselves men.' And Sir Jacob Astley, sixty-three years of age, standing bareheaded before the battle in which he was to risk his life for the King whom he must serve in all hazards, prayed, 'O Lord, thou knowest how busy I must be this day. If I forget thee do not thou forget me. March on, boys.' This prayer is attributed by some writers to Lord Lindsey, but this is due to a misreading of the somewhat ambiguous passage in Philip Warwick's *Memoirs* from which the story is taken.

Robert Bertie, Earl of Lindsey, by his commission was the King's General in Command, but Rupert's insubordination, uncorrected by the King, had already made the old man's position one of extreme difficulty. The Prince had openly announced that he would take orders from nobody but Charles himself, and his indulgent uncle, instead of teaching him his duty and his manners, ordered a redistribution of the command which made Rupert independent of Lindsey's control. Lindsey, finding that he was no longer to be entrusted with the direction of the battle as a whole, insisted only that he should be allowed in

person to lead the King's foot at the centre. Rupert was in command of the cavalry on the right, and Lord Wilmot of the cavalry on the left. With Lindsey at the centre was Sir Edmund Verney bearing the royal standard. The Parliamentary right opposing Wilmot consisted of three regiments of horse, under their respective colonels. In the centre was the main body of infantry under Essex; Brooke and Holles being there with their Purple and Red. The left consisted also of infantry regiments, flanked by twenty-four troops of horse under Sir James Ramsay.

By noon the formation of both armies was approaching completion. Along the Puritan ranks men of the Bible took counsel with men of the sword. From a field at the top of Edgehill two little boys with an old man were watching the preparations. They were the young Princes Charles and James with their tutor, the William Harvey who demonstrated the circulation of the blood. He distinguished himself during the battle by being discovered in the seclusion of a hedge reading a learned treatise. In position the advantage lay with the King on the heights. To stay where he was, and let the Puritans attack up the hillside, was obvious counsel that was freely given by all the experienced leaders of his command. But again Rupert's impetuosity bore down all advice, and decided Charles against plain common sense. Rupert insisted that in one charge he could crush all opposition. His brilliance as a cavalry leader had already been established abroad, and this, together with his confidence and the King's complacency, decided the tactics of the day.

## IV

Winter had set in early and frost was already on the landscape. As the preparations of the morning went forward, the sound of church bells came across the stubble and pastures. About mid-day the King rode along the lines of his army wearing his Star and George on a black velvet mantle over his steel armour, and a velvet covered steel cap. He had already told his officers that 'Come life or death, your King will bear you company, and ever keep this field, this place, and this day's service, in his grateful remembrance.' And now he addressed his troops as friends and soldiers, and thanked them for their love freely offered in his urgent necessity. He spoke of his royal authority, derived from God, whose substitute and supreme governor under Christ he declared himself to be. Let them defend his person and he would reign over their affections. The speech was a strange mixture of tender emotion with the old haughty self-sufficiency before God. 'He that made us King will protect us.' And then, 'I put not my confidence in your strength or number, but confide that, though your King speaks to you, and that with as much love and affection as ever King of England did to his army, yet God, and the justice of our cause, together with the love I bear to the whole kingdom, must give you the best encouragement. In a word, your King bids you all be courageous, and Heaven make you victorious.' Once again the personal courage is evident. However deeply we find Charles to have failed in his kingship,



we must not question the gallantry of words like these. And yet, the note of 'Though your King speaks to you' is symptomatic. Shortly after two o'clock in the afternoon, the royal army moved down upon the Puritans, who awaited the onset in the plain before Kineton.

In one serious matter the unexpectedness of the action found Essex unprepared. His heavier artillery and a large part of his ammunition were a day's march to the rear of his main army, and in the early hours of the morning an urgent message had been sent to Hampden at Stratford-on-Avon to bring these with his men in all haste to Kineton. It was in consequence not until late in the day that the Buckingham Green Coats were on the field at Edgehill.

As the battle opened Rupert's expectation appeared at once to be gloriously realised. At the head of his cavalry he swept through the troops of horse on the parliamentary left, throwing them into a disorder which the infantry of the centre could do nothing to recover. A large part of the foot under Essex was, indeed, involved in the disaster. At the same time, Wilmot was succeeding, though less decisively, on the Royalist left. The wings of the Puritan army were broken and scattered at the first impact. In irreparable confusion the left was driven by Rupert into and through Kineton, its tracks being deep in slaughter.

Speculation as to what might have happened in other circumstances may be no very suitable occupation for adult minds, but it is difficult not to wonder what might have been the result of Edgehill if Rupert, in addition to being a brilliant leader of cavalry, had

been anything but an irresponsible blockhead. Having routed the parliamentary wings, it was his perfectly plain duty to return to the field on which the action at the centre was not yet decided. The shock of his first attack, beyond its actual execution, had severely shaken both the body and the *morale* of the whole Puritan line, and the immediate return of his victorious cavalry before the parliamentary centre had been able to regain its footing and its nerve would almost certainly have prevented the recovery that in fact took place. The consequence would have been a Royalist victory so decisive that the Puritan cause might have been irretrievably damaged. That, perhaps, is an exaggerated view to take. It may well be that no reverse, however severe, could at this first dispute have undermined the stamina with which the Puritan faith was held. Nevertheless, it is difficult to see how Parliament could have survived the disaster that but for the accident of one infatuated personality would almost certainly have befallen them at Edgehill.

Rupert, however, having proved his brilliance, proceeded to a far more staggering proof of his folly. His rout of the troops opposed to him had been complete. By the time he had reached Kineton in pursuit the day had no legitimate employment for him but to return to the main field, instead of which he devoted an invaluable hour to looting the parliamentary baggage wagons which he found drawn up in the streets of the little town. So thoroughly did he indulge himself in this diversion, that when at the end of it he returned to the action and told the King that he could give account of the enemy's horse, a

Cavalier who was standing by exclaimed, 'Aye, by God, and of their carts too.' In the midst of this pillage a messenger arrived from the battle with the tiresome news that the parliamentary forces had rallied, and that unless something was done about it immediately the fortunes of the day were likely to undergo a complete reversal. The October light was beginning to fail as he rode back with his victorious cavalry to the scene from which his headstrong temper should never have kept him. There he found a change indeed. The infantry in the centre under Essex had reasserted themselves, and were firmly advancing against all opposition. The destruction of the cavalry opposed to Rupert had, in spite of Wilmot's moderate success, not been general across the field. Sir Faithful Fortescue, indeed, with singular infelicity, had deserted the Puritans early in the action, but as he and his men neglected to take the precaution of removing the orange scarves that they were wearing as members of the General's bodyguard, a considerable number of them were slain by the troops to whom they had joined themselves. On the Parliament's right, however, several bodies of horse had reorganised themselves after Wilmot's first charge. Among these was the troop that had been raised and brought into the battle by Oliver Cromwell. As Essex went forward in determined and irresistible attack upon the King's guard, these heroic remnants of the Puritan cavalry charged in his support as Rupert again entered the action.

And now, through the dusk that was falling on the field, Hampden's Buckinghamshire Green Coats were seen coming in from the Stratford road. During

the previous night, with other units, they had been dragging the heavy guns through the October mud of seventeenth-century English roads, but now, having moved on by day in advance of their companions, they stood firmly to break Rupert's onset as he was returning to the relief of the hard-pressed royal body-guard. The King's aides urged Charles to fly from the field, pleading that either his death or his capture was inevitable if he remained. Charles, gallant again, refused. He even attempted to place himself in person at the head of his reserves and lead a last hope against Essex in the centre. From this he was restrained almost by force. The return of Rupert, checked though it had been by Hampden, had, however, impeded the decisive stroke that the Puritan infantry seemed to be on the point of delivering, and as night closed in, and it was impossible any longer to distinguish friends from foes, the battle was at a deadlock.

The truth was that both armies were at the point of exhaustion. The gay confidence of the Cavaliers that had been so evident at daybreak, had waned through the heat of an action that had severely tested their insufficient training. The physique of the mercenary veterans had been able to survive the ordeal, but many gallant young gentlemen, who had cut dashing figures on parade and in the hunting field, found that they had by no means yet been hardened to half a day's continuous hand-to-hand fighting. As the bloody scene drew out to what appeared to be interminable hours, many of them fell from sheer fatigue. The Puritan troops on the other hand, had undergone a much severer discipline, but already

when the action opened they had endured the ordeal of the long forced march from Worcester. Edmund Ludlow recorded his own experience. 'The night after the battle our army quartered upon the same ground that the enemy fought on the day before. No man nor horse got any meat that night, and I had touched none since the Saturday before, neither could I find my servant who had my cloak, so that having nothing to keep me warm but a suit of iron, I was obliged to walk about all night, which proved very cold by reason of a sharp frost.' It was not until the following (Monday) night that Ludlow found provisions, and then, 'when I got meat I could scarce eat it, my jaws for want of use, having almost lost their natural faculty.'

The losses in the battle had been very heavy on both sides. No authoritative figures are on record but Whitelock's estimate that out of a total force in the field of something under thirty thousand between five and six thousand were killed does not appear by other evidence to be an exaggeration. It is, however, worth noting, as a reflection on the value of contemporary records, that while Clarendon confirms Whitelock's figures, 'by the testimony of the Minister and others of the next parish, who took care of the burying of the dead, and which was the only computation that could be made,' William Dugdale, who was more learned about Warwickshire matters than most men, says in his *Short View of the Late Troubles in England*, 'To undeceive the world, as to the number on both sides slain, which were then confidently given out to be five thousand, most certain it is that upon strict enquiry from the adjacent inhabitants,

who buried the bodies, and took particular notice of the distinct numbers put into each grave, it appears that there were not one thousand complete there interred.' There is further no reason to suppose that the Puritan losses exceeded those of the King in the proportion of two to one, but among the higher officers the royal casualties were the more damaging. Lord Lindsey was taken from the field mortally wounded, and Sir Edmund Verney died bearing the standard that in life he would not surrender.

No strictly consistent and authoritative account of the battle of Edgehill has survived. In all probability, none was ever recorded. The principal features of the day, however, were substantially as here given. There is conflicting evidence as to the movements of Hampden himself. Ludlow says that he arrived, with other regiments, during the night, after the action had closed. But Ludlow, although he was present as cadet with Essex at the battle, was as likely as not to be imperfectly informed as to the movements of troops in other parts of the field. Whitelock makes a similar statement, and Firth, in the *Dictionary of National Biography* follows these authorities, saying summarily that Hampden was not at Edgehill. Gardiner, on the other hand, asserts that he was there, but that his encounter with Rupert took place on the road beyond Kington, along which the undisciplined pursuit of the broken Puritan wing was extending. Nugent's account, compiled from an exhaustive examination of all available authorities, leaves no reasonable doubt that Hampden's arrival was in fact instrumental in making Rupert's return to the main action ineffective.

## EARLY MOVEMENTS OF THE WAR

As morning broke on the day after the battle, both armies were found in the positions they had occupied overnight. A fitful sleep had done but little to restore the energies of either force, but a review of the situation made it clear that the Puritans were in much better train than their adversaries for a resumption of the conflict. Hampden's regiment with other reinforcements amounted altogether to no less than four thousand men, including a considerable body of horse. During the early hours of the morning the Puritans were engaged in burying their dead, performing a like office for many of the Cavaliers. The King's army was seen resting along the brow of Edgehill, from which the day before it had descended with such abundant hope. As the melancholy work was going forward, it was observed that the royal troops were moving. It was realised instantly that the King had decided to give no further battle, and the whole Puritan army waited on the word of Essex that should send them in pursuit. It was never given. It was now that the indecisiveness that was later to ruin Essex first asserted itself on an occasion of capital importance. Hampden, Brooke and Holles urged him, in words that severely strained the demands of discipline, to strike. But he was immovable. No explanation of his conduct is possible other than the somewhat nebulous one that he was constitutionally incapable of consecutive purpose. The opportunity that lay before him on the morning of October 24th, 1642, at the moment when the King by the movement of his troops declared openly that he was not prepared to try the issue further, was one such as has seldom fallen to a general for putting the crown of success on

an indecisive action. Whitelock speaking of the 'gallant, stout and fresh regiments' which Essex on that morning had at his disposal, maintains with every reason that 'had he with these fresh forces made a new assault upon the King's disordered and tired army, it might have gone far to put an issue on the business.' Hampden, when he found that all entreaties were unavailing, even went so far as to beg to be allowed to lead the advance himself. Essex, however, was resolved in his irresolution, and ordered a retirement to Warwick.

Not less astonishing than the refusal by Essex to take the advantage that lay before him, was the King's failure to make use of the chance that was suddenly presented beyond all his hopes. Throughout his movements south, his fixed design had been to march upon London. Now, owing to an inexplicable lapse of judgment on the part of his enemies, the road lay clear before him. The purpose for which Essex had been sent in his pursuit appeared to have faded mysteriously from the Puritan mind. A few days before, the King's most devout hope was that Essex would prove to be unable to intercept his progress to the capital. The hope was destroyed as after the action of Edgehill he found himself in a condition that he knew would be unable to resist further Puritan assault. Not only was the assault withheld, its menace was withdrawn, and then, with King's luck indeed most strangely to his hand, he declined to take it. Instead of marching rapidly on London, he drifted into Oxford, and there rested in a state of indecision worthy of Essex himself. His advisers, it is said in his defence, were strongly against his



approach to London 'in conquest,' as likely further to inflame the opposition against him. More disgraceful counsel in the circumstances could not well have been devised.\*

Before Charles and Essex, almost it would seem by mutual consent, parted at Edgehill, a grotesque exchange of messages had been made. The King under flag of truce sent a proclamation dated 'From our Court on Edgehill,' offering a free pardon to Essex and any members of his army who should surrender. To which Essex replied that he would take the advice of Parliament in the matter.

It was on leaving the field of Edgehill that Cromwell, in conversation with his cousin, told him that if they were to succeed they must enlist 'such men alone as would in the name of God discover such a spirit as their enemies had that day shown in the name of the King.' Here was the inception of the idea that was afterwards to be so magnificently expressed in Oliver's Ironsides. It is amusing to note that Dugdale's evidence, even on Warwickshire matters, is not always convincing. His absurd story of Cromwell's behaviour at Edgehill deserves to be repeated as an example of the extremes to which party fanaticism can lead an intelligent man.

'Some of them before the fight, standing doubtful of the success, forbore to adventure themselves therein; amongst which the after-famous Oliver Cromwell was one (if some of the most eminent persons of his own party, who were in the fight, belie him not) who, being

\*See Appendix B for an account of supernatural events after the Battle of Edgehill.

Captain of a troop of horse in the General's regiment, came not into the field, but got up into a steeple within view of the battle ; and there, discerning by a Prospective-glass the two wings of their horse to be utterly routed, made such haste to be gone, that instead of descending the stairs by which he came up, he swing'd down by a bell-rope, and ran away with his troop.'

The story, it must be allowed, is not without its charm.

The first intelligence of Edgehill to reach London was carried by the fugitives who had been driven by Rupert from the field. All that was known before their arrival was that an action had been fought, news which had been communicated by a line of beacons from height to height, no arrangement having been made, however, by which the result of the action should be known. The fugitives, not doubting that their own misfortunes had been shared by the entire Puritan army, reported complete disaster. A few hours later they were followed by other messengers from the field announcing that on the contrary 'The Earl of Essex had totally routed the King.' Between these conflicting reports Parliament was left to make what it could of the situation until the official despatches should arrive. One exceedingly disconcerting fact in any case was clear. Whether the King was beaten or not he was still between the Puritan army and London. And if Essex, whatever his success, had failed to stop the royal progress at Edgehill, there could be little hope that he would do so elsewhere. Parliament, and indeed the whole city, was thrown into a state of consternation, as well they

might be. The only certainty that emerged from the confused information before them was that within a few days the King would be upon them. His army might have suffered heavily in the recent action, but it still would be strong enough to have them at its mercy. As to what mercy they might now expect from the King they cherished no illusions. The inescapable conclusion was that they were lost, and lost they probably would have been had not Charles by his delay at Oxford thrown away such an opportunity as was never to be given him again. The desperate anxiety in London was relieved by later tidings that Essex, fortunate in spite of himself, had marched from Warwick to Northampton, thus leaving Oxford and the King behind him on the approach to London. In the meantime, as Whitelock says, 'Upon the news of this battle, all countries were alarmed and frightened, being a strange thing in England.'

## CHAPTER VII

### HAMPDEN WITH THE ARMY. CHALGROVE FIELD. HIS DEATH

#### I

IN what for a moment threatened to become panic, the citizens of London turned with renewed energy to their preparations for defence. All the outlying approaches to the city were busy with the movement of volunteers and the erection of barricades. Distracted messages were sent post haste to Essex imploring him to bring the King to a second action, to turn his flank, to outmarch him, to do any likely or unlikely thing that might cope with the emergency. The Lieutenants and deputies of the home counties were in a similar state of alarm. Hampden on the march to London sent reassuring words to his Buckinghamshire friends from Northampton.

‘To my noble friends, Colonel Bulstrode, Captain Grenvil, Captain Tyrell, Captain West, or any of them.

Gentlemen,

The army is now at Northampton, moving every day nearer to you. If you disband not we may be a mutual succour to each other ; but if you disperse, you make yourselves and your country a prey.

You shall hear daily from

Your Servant,

Northampton,

JOHN HAMPDEN.

*Oct. 31.*

## HAMPDEN WITH THE ARMY

I wrote this enclosed letter yesterday, and thought it would have come to you then; but the messenger had occasion to stay till this morning. We cannot be ready to march till to-morrow; and then I believe, we shall. I desire you will be pleased to send to me again, as soon as you can, to the army, and then you will hear which way we go. You shall do me a favour to certify me what you hear of the King's forces; for I believe your intelligence is better from Oxford and those parts than our's can be.

Your humble Servant,

JOHN HAMPDEN.

Northampton,  
*Nov. 1, 1642.'*

Captain Grenville, one of the deputies above mentioned, received less comfortable news from a friend who had lately been in Oxford. The King was intending for London with all speed, and Reading was to be inhumanly plundered. Rupert's Privy Chamberlain, having been convicted as a spy receiving £50 a week from the Parliament, had been hanged, drawn and quartered. The Cavaliers were walking about the streets with pole-axes which they employed without discretion upon anyone whose face they did not like. The King had with him seven thousand mounted infantry, but the information as to the number of foot men was uncertain, save that he had twelve hundred 'poor Welch vermins, the offscowering of the nation.' Dr. Hood, the Warden of New College sent his best respects to Captain Grenville, but would much like to receive the rent for lands held by that

1796 18  
Bulstrode

The army is now at North  
Hampton making every day more  
near to you. if you & band not  
will may be a mutuall succour  
each to other. but if you & I  
perce you make your felons &  
y<sup>e</sup> country a pray. you shall hear  
daily fro

yo<sup>r</sup> servant

J. Hampden

Northampton  
October 31.



[British Museum.]

JOHN HAMPDEN'S LETTER TO BULSTRODE AND OTHERS.

gentleman under the College. With which the correspondent wished 'soe much happines' to his Captain's worship.

At the moment when Hampden's letter was being dispatched to the Buckinghamshire deputies, news was received that Rupert was engaged on extensive foraging operations at Aylesbury. Hampden's regiment formed part of a small force that was sent to deal with these. They found that the Prince had laid the countryside severely under levy, and was in occupation of the town. Hearing of the Puritans' approach, Rupert with his usual impetuosity moved out to meet them. He was, moreover, disinclined to face an action in the midst of hostile inhabitants. In this misgiving he was justified. In a severe skirmish along the Thame brook, Rupert was heavily punished by the parliamentarians on his front, while the infuriated townsmen, eager to avenge the indignities that they had suffered at his hands, fell savagely on his rear. Recovering what he could of his broken troops, Rupert fell back towards Oxford. On November 4th, Essex called upon the Buckinghamshire deputies to meet him at St. Albans with what strength they could raise and join the main army which was marching to the defence of London. Three days later, November 7th, the General entered London, and was received at Westminster with a gratuity of £5,000 voted for his services at Edgehill. It was more than he could have reasonably expected.

The city was thoroughly scared, and the arrival of Essex with his army was the occasion of heavy recruitments. Parliament ordered that all apprentices

enlisting should be allowed to deduct their period of service from their indentures. Further appeals were made to the Scots for assistance, with hopeful results. Reports came in that the King on the road had passed through Reading and Henley, and that Rupert was already at Maidenhead with a strong advance guard quartered at Colnbrook. A regiment of Rupert's Horse took possession of Bulstrode Whitelock's establishment at Fawley Court, and there conducted themselves in the manner that gave Rupert's command an unsavoury reputation in both armies. Whitelock, who throughout the war remained one of the most earnest advocates of reconciliation, and was studiously careful in his *Memorials* to preserve a moderate tone, tells his story, as he assured us, 'only to raise a constant hatred of any thing that may in the least tend to the fomenting of such unhappiness and misery.' His account of the behaviour at his house is as follows :

' Sir John Biron and his brothers commanded those horse, and gave order that they should commit no insolence at my house, nor plunder my goods ; but soldiers are not easily governed against their plunder, or persuaded to restrain it, for there being about a thousand of the King's Horse quartered in and about the house, and none but servants there, there was no insolence or outrage usually committed by common soldiers on a reputed enemy, which was not committed by these brutish fellows at my house. Then they had their whores with them, they spent and consumed a hundred load of corn and hay, littered their horses with sheaves of good wheat, and gave them all sorts



of corn in the straw ; divers writings of consequence, and books which were left in my study, some of them they tore in pieces, others they burnt to light their tobacco, and some they carried away with them, to my extreme great loss and prejudice, in wanting the writings of my estate, and losing very many excellent manuscripts of my fathers and others, and some of my own labours.

‘ They broke down my park pales, killed most of my deer, though rascal and carrion, and let out all the rest, only a tame young stag, they carried away and presented to Prince Rupert, and my hounds which were extraordinary good. They eat and drank up all that the house could afford, broke up all trunks, chests, and places ; and where they found linen or any household stuff they took it away with them, and cutting the beds, let out the feathers, and took away the ticks. They likewise carried away my coach, and four good horses, and all my saddle horses, and did put all the mischief and spoil, that malice and enmity could provoke barbarous mercenaries to commit, and so they parted.’

Essex, moving out of London, mobilised his forces against the King’s advance. He himself took up a position at Kingston-upon-Thames, assigning to Brooke, Holles and Hampden the protection of Uxbridge and Brentford. In the meantime, Parliament sent commissioners to the King desiring a conference for the discussion of terms. They were received by his Majesty at Colnbrook and assured that no reasonable proposals would be rejected. In answer to a request that he would take up residence

again in one of his London palaces, Charles replied that he was willing to conduct negotiations from Windsor. The commissioners left for London, to place these happy tidings before the Parliament, and the next day the King marched in force upon Brentford.

The only defence of this characteristic crookedness was that offered by the King himself, in which he claimed that as the commissioners were returning to London he learnt of the preparations that were being made by Essex. There was no shadow of plausibility in the pretence. From the moment that Essex marched out of London, the King was fully informed of his movements. The restricted area of operations in the home counties made secret manœuvres an impossibility. Further, so willing was Parliament in spite of all experience to give more than due credit to the King's assurances, that immediately on arrival of the commissioners at Westminster an order was issued forbidding Essex and his command to undertake any act of hostility against the King while the treaty was under consideration. In the circumstances, the King's advance upon Brentford was but further proof of his incurable duplicity.

Early on the morning of November 12th, Denzil Holles, with his regiment of Red Coats was resting in his Brentford quarters, over which flew a flag of truce. Suddenly, in the November mist, eight regiments of the King's foot with twenty troops of horse broke in upon their repose. At the first onslaught the Puritans were driven in confusion through the streets, many being slain 'and divers driven into the river and drowned, being mightily

overpowered with numbers.' For three hours nevertheless they put up a desperate resistance, fighting from house to house, and yielding not a foot of ground uncontested. At the end of that time the Purple and Green Coats of Brooke and Hampden entered the town at the double to the relief of their friends.

Five times they charged through the streets of Brentford in an effort to clear a retreat for Holles and his heroic defence, until, says Ludlow, ' Our men being encompassed quite round with horse and foot and . . . many brave and gallant men having lost their lives upon the place, the rest choosing rather to commit themselves to the mercy of the water, than to those who were engaged in so treacherous a design, leaped into the river, where many officers and private soldiers were drowned. . . . However, the enemies' design was by this means defeated, and they discouraged from any farther attempt that night.' Before the day closed Essex, having received news of the action while he was exercising the city trained bands in Chelsea Fields, was seen to be advancing to the relief of Hampden, Holles and Brooke, who had been able to re-form some remnant of their men after the scene described by Ludlow. Exhausted though they were by the terrible ordeal which by the King's treachery they had suffered, the gallant survivors of the Brentford defence joined themselves to Essex, and in the dark threw themselves again upon the town, and carried it by assault. They pursued the King's troops for many miles ' as long as they could see the glimmer of the matches.'

During this shameful enterprise of his direction,

Charles himself had remained at Hounslow. Essex, on the day after the affair at Brentford, in consultation with Parliament, formed the design of enclosing the King between the main Puritan force and three thousand troops who had taken up a position at Kingston. Again at the last moment he changed his mind for the worse. Abandoning this admirable strategy, he ordered the Kingston detachment to make a detour and enter the city by London Bridge. He then organised a concentration of the entire Puritan strength on the common at Turnham Green.

Essex in chief command was attended by the county and metropolitan regiments, strongly reinforced by new recruits since Edgehill. The city bands who, through the determined agency of Sir Isaac Pennington, Lord Mayor of London, and in face of strong opposition from more cautious members of the corporation, had been detailed to join Essex in the field, were commanded by Philip Skippon, an old soldier of experience, and a mighty gospeller before the Lord. He was a fearless fighter, and something of a penman too, writing devotional pamphlets for the use of his men. Now, under his inspiring leadership, 'The city bands marched forth very cheerfully. . . . He went all along with the soldiers talking to them, sometimes to one company and sometimes to another ; and the soldiers seemed to be more taken with it than a set formal oration.' He called them his brave boys, and bade them to come on with him, to pray heartily and fight heartily, and God would bless them.

As the troops marched through Hammersmith, they passed the guns drawn up in readiness to defend

the outposts of London. When the army had assembled on Turnham Green, it was found to be twenty-four thousand strong, now well furnished and in high spirits. The Earl of Holland was Marshal for the day, and under his ordering the Puritan arms presented a spectacle more impressive than anything the war had yet seen. Essex himself was with a company of horse, supported by a long line of county colonels with their troops, Arthur Goodwin among them, all bright in their orange scarves. Behind them were drawn up the foot regiments, wearing their distinctive colours, headed by the colonels and standard-bearers, and each supported by a detachment of the city bands.

With the drums in readiness to beat the advance, Essex and his commanders drew up their plan of action. A strong force, with Hampden's regiment in the van, was to proceed by way of Acton, and place itself in a position to attack the King from the rear, while Essex advanced upon his front. Again it was an admirable conception, and again Essex defected his own strategy. Whitelock was with Hampden, and he tells that when they had gone a mile or two on their way they were observed by the enemy with manifest signs of concern. Charles realised what was happening, and did not at all like the manner of it. And then at that moment Hampden saw one of the General's staff officers in pursuit. The decision to divide the forces had been cancelled, and by an order from Essex Hampden was at once to rejoin the main army with his men. 'At which,' says Whitelock, 'we were exceedingly troubled and wondered how this should come to pass, that we should be recalled and lose so great an advantage against the enemy, and it was

feared that some who were false had given this advice to the General.'

Once more it was clear that irresolution had seized the supreme command. Hour after hour yet another opportunity of striking a decisive blow slipped by, as Essex allowed his officers to dispute as to whether they should advance or not, and again Hampden was foremost among those who implored that immediate action should be taken. In this he was vigorously supported by the evangelical Skippon. While this deplorable dispute was going on, two things happened. Not unwilling to fight, but losing their nerve under this uncertainty and delay, 'divers of the soldiers would steal from their Colours towards their home, the city.' But of much greater significance was a sudden movement among the King's troops. A Royalist retreat was beginning, and very soon it was in full operation. Hampden and Skippon, and indeed all the officers of authentic Puritan standing, besieged Essex with entreaties that amounted to demands that they should be allowed to follow in pursuit. But the older mercenaries, to whose counsel Essex was always unduly susceptible, persuaded him that his main object had been achieved by the King's retreat. London was now secure, pursuit would be hazardous, and the prudent course clearly was to leave well alone. Essex yielded to the evil counsel. The King drew off his troops unmolested, and passing through Reading at his leisure established himself again at Oxford. And, says Whitelock, 'Some of the King's party did afterwards confess to me and others, that if we had fallen on them at this time they had not bullets enough to have maintained fight for a quarter of an hour, but

CHALGROVE FIELD. HIS DEATH



ROBERT DEVEREVX EARLE OF ESSEX, HIS EXCEL<sup>ty</sup>  
lency Generall of y<sup>e</sup> Army.

The Earl of Essex.

*Engraved by Hollar.*

that, in probability, we had wholly broken them and that this was the cause of their retreat.'

## II

It was now the middle of November. During the following weeks, while Charles was settling into Oxford, Essex drove Rupert and the Royalist rear-guard out of Marlow and Henley, and garrisoned the Thames valley between the latter town and London. Rupert took possession of Reading. Hampden, supported by a cavalry troop under John Urry, was sent with his Buckinghamshire regiment to dislodge him. Rupert himself, however, did not await Hampden's arrival, but left his baggage in the town with fifteen hundred men under Colonel Kirke, whose son was to make the name infamous when in a later generation Judge Jeffreys was in the west.

Reading, although it was in the hands of the King, was inhabited largely by friends of the Parliament, and Hampden refrained from bombardment. His offer of honourable terms having been refused by Kirke, he sat down in front of the town, waiting an opportunity. At daybreak on the third morning, Hampden and Urry with four hundred men made a surprise attempt by assault. After an initial success of the outer defences, they were repulsed, with heavy losses. Hampden, leading a second attack in person, found his men engaged on the outworks of the town with the whole garrison which had been brought out by Kirke. The action, in which men fought toe to toe, lasted four hours, at the end of which time Kirke made his escape, and left the town with stores, baggage and a



great number of prisoners, in Hampden's possession. Apparently, however, no attempt was made by the Puritans to hold it. Essex was incapable of so decisive a policy.

This account of events at Reading earlier than the more celebrated siege of April, 1643, is taken from a contemporary pamphlet entitled *The True Relation of the Proceedings of His Excellency the Earl of Essex with his Army since his departure from these Parts, in pursuit of the Cavaliers. With the taking of Reading by Colonel Hampden and Colonel Hurry with their regiments [etc.]. By H. G. London. Printed for John Matthews.* The pamphlet is undated, but it clearly refers to and is contemporary with parliamentary movements during the period following Turnham Green. Gardiner dismisses the publication as 'one of the many lying reports' of the time, but I see no reason for doubting its authenticity. Apart from the fact that the figures of Kirke's casualties are no doubt exaggerated—they are given as four hundred—it is a dry and detailed narrative, with no sign of invention in it. It is impossible to trace the movements of Hampden, or any other figure of the Civil War, from day to day in these early months of action, but there is no doubt that when he was not at Westminster he was chiefly employed with his Buckinghamshire men in their own midland neighbourhood. Apart from the specific occasions upon which he is known to have been there, the general circumstances warrant the assumption of his presence. He was colonel of the Green Coat militia that he himself had raised, and as Mr. F. J. Varley points out in his admirable book *The Siege of Oxford* (1932), 'The territorial attachments of the units of each army caused a marked

reluctance to serve outside a particular area, so that locally recruited units often melted away when taken far from their homes. The Royalist armies naturally contained more professional soldiers without local ties, and were to this extent less hampered than the Rebels in distant expeditions.' In other words, Hampden and his Buckinghamshire regiment were active always in the midlands of the Thames valley, and Reading was within the natural scope of this activity. It would have been perfectly natural for them to be there in December, 1642; a straightforward and circumstantial account says that they were; and until evidence is forthcoming to show that they were not, it seems unnecessary to stigmatise H. G., whoever he may have been, as a liar.

In view of the uncertainty attaching to this episode in Hampden's brief military career, the situation in Reading at the time may be more particularly noted. As early as September 2nd, 1642, it was ordered by the Mayor and Aldermen of the town, in 'consideration of the great danger . . . by reason of the Cavaliers abroad' that scouts should be sent out daily into the surrounding country. On October 5th a further resolution was passed 'that watches and ward both day and night' should be continued. On the 10th, eighteen householders were specified for this duty by night, and twelve by day. The town was still openly Puritan in sympathy. On November 7th, a letter to the news-sheet, *Truths from Several Parts of the Kingdom*, stated that Colonel Martin [Henry Marten, the parliamentary Governor] had left the town to the Royalists on Rupert's advance. Coates's *History of Reading* assigns this departure to November 1st. On the 9th

a correspondent to another news-letter, *True and Remarkable Passages* [etc.], wrote : ‘ Here we have been in a great fear this two or three days of Prince Robert [Rupert] and his Cavaliers, who like roaring lions go about seeking whom they can devour, plundering and pillaging the countries round about us. No man’s estate being his own, or secure from the fingers of these Harpies.’ On the same day the Reading Corporation debated ‘ the execution of the King’s Warrants, and despatch of other his Majesty’s business.’

The town by that date, then, three days before the affair at Brentford, was in Royalist possession, under the governorship of Sir Arthur Aston. A levy of two thousand pounds a month was exacted from the very unwilling inhabitants to meet the King’s charges, until in January the Corporation protested that the resources of the place had been drained dry, and that it was useless to attempt any further exactions. In these records, published as the *Diary of the Corporation of Reading*, under the Rev. J. M. Guilding’s editorship, in 1896, no mention is made of Hampden’s attack in December, 1642. But neither is any mention made of the fully authenticated siege in April, 1643. On January 2nd, 1643, however, a suggestive entry appears in the Corporation minutes. On that day it was resolved ‘ that the town shall join with the county in a petition as well to the King as to both Houses of Parliament for an accommodation.’ This implies a freedom of action that would hardly have been possible unless Aston’s authority in the town, which at the beginning of November had been absolute, had in the meantime been shaken in its

security. A successful assault, such as that which is reported to have been made by Hampden, even although the gain had been relinquished, would constitute precisely the kind of threat that seems to be indicated.

The first campaign of the war had given no decided advantage to either side. During the following winter there was little military movement. The most important feature of those months was the return of Cromwell to his native countryside, where he began to organise the Ironside troops, which under the direction of his genius were to be the foundation of the ultimate Puritan triumph. A few small garrison towns on either side were taken by siege, Fairfax made some progress in the north, and Pym was eloquent at Westminster keeping the Puritans in heart. The Queen succeeded in effecting a landing at Burlington in Yorkshire, bringing arms and ammunition from Holland, and was proclaimed a traitor by the Commons. Parliament, in order to propitiate the Scots, accepted the principles of the Covenant, and the citizens were asked to 'spare one meal weekly' as a contribution to the public funds.

In January a new effort was made to effect a treaty, and in March commissioners were sent in state to Oxford for this purpose. Whitelock, who was a member of the mission, found it all very affable. They were called names in the street by the riff-raff of Oxford, but on being received by the King in Christ Church gardens they were graciously allowed to kiss his hand, and presented to the Prince of Wales. Also the Earl of Northumberland, the senior commissioner, 'carried with him his own plate and household stuff

and accommodation even to wine and provisions,' and entertained his colleagues freely, being allowed sometimes to supply even the royal table itself with delicacies. The mission, however, was a failure. Charles was prepared to do anything, and did nothing. At one point it seemed that a settlement had been reached, but on the following day the King revoked all his undertakings. Expostulations were in vain. Being reminded of his royal word, he merely replied that he had changed his mind, and the commissioners were recalled to London. The negotiations came to an end on April 15th, 1643.

By this time there was renewed activity in the field. Rupert brought over a thousand prisoners into Oxford from a success at Cirencester, and again his conduct was an offence.

'These prisoners were led in much triumph to Oxford, where the King, and Lords looked on them, and too many smiled at their misery, being tied together with cords almost naked, beaten, and driven along like dogs.

'Among them was a proper handsome man of a very white skin, where it could be seen for the blood of his wounds, he not being able to go, was set naked upon the bare back of a horse, his wounds gaping, and his body smeared with blood ; yet he sat upright upon the horse, with an undaunted countenance, and when near the King a brawling woman cried out to him, " Ah you traiterly rogue, you are well enough served," he, with a scornful look towards her, answered, " You base whore " : and instantly dropped off dead from his horse.'

During the winter months Hampden continued his life of intense activity, moving to and fro between the field and Westminster with untiring energy. He was troubled at times on questions of discipline, being perplexed, in a letter to Essex, 'with the insolence of the soldiers already committed, and apprehensive of greater;' he asks for stricter control, fearing, no doubt with Rupert in mind, that their army may grow 'as odious to the country as the Cavaliers.' Essex at this time had his headquarters at Windsor and John Denham in a squib on Hampden was, perhaps, complimentary rather by chance than design :

*'Have I so often passed between  
Windsor and Westminster, unseen,  
And did myself divide,  
To keep His Excellence in awe,  
And give the Parliament the law?  
For they knew none beside.'*

Denham was saying no more than the truth. Hampden had already proved himself to be one of the wisest and most intrepid leaders of the new army, while his political counsel was more than ever needed and sought in Parliament.

He was also at this time the principal agent for organising the counties of Buckinghamshire, Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire, Huntingdon, Cambridge and Northampton in one of the associations that were then being formed for the more efficient conduct of the war. Here again his enterprise and sagacity rendered great service in composing many conflicting interests and personalities to one common purpose. His work on

this committee, which was left unfinished at his death, was the foundation upon which Cromwell was to build the most effective Puritan agency of the war, the Eastern Association.

On March 2nd, Hampden had lost one of his most devoted friends, and Parliament one of its most gallant soldiers. In an attack upon Lichfield, Lord Brooke was directing the operations of a battery from the window of a little house near the Close, and was there shot dead by a sharpshooter from the battlements on one of the Cathedral spires.

As the spring advanced, events began to shape favourably for the King. His campaigns in the north and south-west were meeting with considerable success. Fairfax, although he was making stubborn resistance, was hard pressed in Yorkshire, and at Bradock Down in Cornwall Sir Ralph Hopton had routed a strong Puritan force in January. Sir Bevil Grenville in a letter to his wife, 'My Deare Love,' having noted 'the messenger is paid, yet give him a shilling more,' was able to inform her on that occasion that 'their courage so failed as they stood not the first charge of the foot, but fled in great disorder ; and we chased them divers miles. Many are not slain because of their quick disordering. But we have taken above six hundred prisoners, and more are still brought in by the soldiers . . . and so I hope we are now again in the way to settle the country in peace. . . . Let my . . . friends understand of God's mercy to us ; and we lost not a man.' Grenville himself was killed in action at Lansdown six months later.

The King's chief advantage lay now, as it had done from the beginning, in the invertebrate aimlessness of

Essex. Hampden and those of a like mind were continually urging him to make a direct attack on the King's headquarters at Oxford, but Essex was incapable of seeing the most obvious necessity of the situation. Instead of attacking Oxford, he committed himself to a strategic plan in the midlands which was no plan at all and resulted only in a gradual drift of his outposts towards London. By the end of February Essex was in no better position than he had been after the fiasco of Turnham Green in the previous November. For all the initiative that he was showing it might have been supposed that he had no other duty to perform than that of guarding the approaches to the capital. He seems almost to have cherished some muddled belief that if the King's army was only left alone long enough it would dissolve into its elements.

Early in March, 1643, while the parliamentary commissioners were first sitting with the King in treaty at Oxford, Rupert appeared in Buckinghamshire with a large force threatening Aylesbury. Hampden and his men with Goodwin and other reinforcements at once moved to join Colonel Bulstrode who was in command of that town. The demands from Parliament and his own officers that Essex should take action now became peremptory, and as Rupert stood before Aylesbury he not only found the town defended beyond all his expectations, but also heard that Essex with the main Puritan army was moving to cut off his retreat to Oxford. He retired in the direction of Birmingham, in the sack of which town he further disgraced himself. The Puritans, however, had reason to thank him for his design upon Aylesbury ; it had brought Essex again actively into the field. On March 24th, as



Rupert drew off his troops, the remobilisation of the Puritan army had effectively begun. On April 15th, the day upon which the treaty negotiations came to an end, Essex, again disregarding Hampden's request that he should march immediately on Oxford, proceeded to the recapture of Reading. To Hampden was entrusted the command of an advance force which entrenched itself before the town under cover of the night. On the following day the siege began. On the 24th, it was still in progress, when the King arrived at Wallingford with a relief army. He was met by Essex at Caversham, and being repulsed after a severe engagement, returned to Wallingford, whereupon, already at the end of its resources, Reading surrendered. The garrison, having capitulated, was unaccountably allowed to leave with the honours of war and join the King at Oxford. The first parliamentarians to enter the town were Hampden and Skippon, who were sent by Essex to reconnoitre with a working party. It was an angry army that followed them. Inflamed by Rupert's excesses at Birmingham and elsewhere, reports of which were fresh in their minds, the men threatened reprisals. But this was the sort of occasion upon which Essex was at his best. He controlled the situation with a firmness and reason, and not a word of his famous Worcester orders was violated. Feilding, the commander of the garrison, was tried by court martial at Oxford, condemned, and reprieved by Charles when the scaffold had already been erected. Hampden had offered to give evidence on Feilding's behalf, saying that surrender had been inevitable, but he was not heard.

Essex had done something, and it was only just in

time. Disaffection in the Puritan arms, caused by his inactivity, was becoming acute. Men of great position transferred their allegiance to the King. Among these was the Earl of Northumberland, whom Clarendon called the proudest man alive. Sir John Hotham, at Hull, and Colonel Urry, who had been with Hampden at the first assault on Reading, revolted from their allegiance. Northumberland's defection was serious, but it is true that neither Hotham, in spite of his historic gesture, nor Urry, were men of much quality. Nevertheless, their behaviour was dangerously significant. With a shrewd experience of affairs they believed that they had chosen the wrong side, and changed it. The reasons upon which they acted were poignantly present to many minds of the finest integrity. In the spring of 1643, men like Hampden in the Puritan army must often have been very near to despair.

For twenty-five years he had given his life to a cause that was now not merely in adversity : it seemed to be almost on the point of dissolution. The King, whatever might be the present defects of his organisation, was sustained by one perfectly clear aim, which was to preserve his own security on the throne. The Puritan ideal, on the other hand, was incapable of so plain an interpretation. It was of an abstract political nature, and depended for its very existence upon a vigorous advocacy. That advocacy, discouraged by nine months of wholly indeterminate action in the field, was losing spirit, and it needed all the resolution of men like Hampden to keep their faith unspoilt. Fully to realise the state of England in 1643 is more than ever to wonder at the genius of Cromwell,

labouring in this most barren time towards a purpose the destiny of which he never doubted in the darkest hours. Hampden's faith was not less than Cromwell's, but he was troubled by a more philosophic mind. Cromwell, as sensitive in his personal contacts as any man alive, had a streak of ruthlessness in his character that Hampden lacked. As determined in the field and in the strategy of war as any leader of the Puritan army, Hampden, nevertheless, could be deeply stirred by personal considerations to which Cromwell would have opposed a deliberately frozen mind. By such considerations Hampden's closing months were heavily clouded. His close association with Essex more and more persuaded him that the General, whose integrity could not be questioned, was not inspired by any dominating zeal, and that his natural infirmity was beyond repair.

## III

Moreover, Hampden's despondency was nourished by disorders that touched him yet more nearly. Rupert's garrison had left Reading in a state so revolting that several Puritan regiments mutinied on being ordered to take up quarters in the town. Among these were the Buckingham Green Coats, and although his immediate attendance from Westminster restored them to discipline, the experience was a saddening one. For these men had endured with him the severities of a winter's campaign, and he knew how deep was their loyalty and their personal devotion. In their normal mood, conditions of the Reading quarters would not have influenced their conduct for a moment, but they

were in a mood, induced by the apathy of Essex, that was no longer normal. Even the stoutest of these ycomen, as they saw their General-in-Chief let one opportunity after another drift by him, were beginning to ask what the devil it was all about.

There was also the discovery of an infamous plot to suborn the army, in which Hampden's kinsmen Edmund Waller, the poet, and Alexander Hampden were involved. They both escaped with their lives, but in dishonour. Waller had actually been engaged in the plot at the very moment when he was with the King at Oxford as one of the parliamentary commissioners. It was all profoundly discouraging. Hampden's liberal mind was further disconcerted in these days by the rising influence of Scots Presbyterianism in England. He was fully conscious of the military advantages to be gained from a Scots alliance, and indeed was active in promoting it. Nevertheless, his tolerant spirit viewed with growing apprehension a fanaticism that was not less shocking than anything that had been practised by Laud. The liberty of conscience which was an article of his faith was certainly never to be realised under the direction of bigots who on a difference of religious opinion could descend to obscenities such as those recorded by Gardiner of Francis Cheynell, a Presbyterian chaplain, at the burial of William Chillingworth, the great Protestant latitudinarian. Cheynell, says Gardiner, 'attended the funeral, but only that he might throw into the open grave that book, *The Religion of Protestants*, which is Chillingworth's chief title to the admiration of later generations. "If they please," so Cheynell tells the story of his insolence, "to undertake

the burial of his corpse, I shall undertake to bury his errors, which are published in this so much admired yet unworthy book ; and happy would it be for the kingdom if this book and all its fellows could be so buried. Get thee gone, thou cursed book, which hast seduced so many precious souls ! Get thee gone, thou corrupt rotten book ! Earth to earth, and dust to dust ! Get thee out into this place of rottenness, that thou mayest rot with the author, and see corruption ! ” ”

Finally, there was the gradual decay of reality at Westminster. Conscious that the real control of the nation had passed from themselves to soldiers who were at present discovering no fitness to exercise it, most of the members in active session were driven from their early patriotic ardour into a somewhat tawdry political opportunism. In this Hampden could have no part. Although the Long Parliament was graced by no more constructive intelligence than his, he was not by calling a politician at all. He belonged rather to that long line of illustrious Englishmen who in the highest counsels of the nation have yet seemed in some way to stand aloof from the vocation which, often with the most spirited ability, they have adorned. It is no reflection to say of certain statesmen that the only circumstance that could keep them out of Parliament would be an adverse verdict at the polls, while of others we feel that the event most likely to result in their retirement would be the establishment of their cause. Pym, Pitt, Disraeli, fair weather or foul these men could not have stayed away from Westminster by choice ; but Hampden, Burke, Cobden, such as these, could they have realised their Utopian dreams, would have been content to depart in peace. The examples

may be a matter of personal preference, but the distinction is a real one. Certain it is in any case that John Hampden had no predisposition for parliamentary conflict as such. He saw it only as a means to the end, which was a reformed and liberated England. In the closing months of his life, Parliament became little better than an expediency, disabled and demoralised in impotent effort to achieve a purpose that had become confused. Hampden, in the midst of these discouragements, lost neither his faith nor his fortitude. Had he lived, we may believe that with Cromwell he would have directed the new life that invigorated the Puritan cause after Marston Moor in 1644. But in the event he had nothing to sustain him to his death but a conviction, unsupported by any present circumstances, that somehow or another right must prevail.

Having reduced Reading, Essex relapsed into his natural state of torpor. He disposed his lines with an incompetence that enabled Rupert to prosecute a guerilla warfare which was immune from punishment. The Puritan troops, maddened by this constraint, discarded their affection for Old Robin, and petitioned Parliament for his removal. They begged that Hampden should be put in his place. What would have happened if their desires had been granted must remain matter for attractive speculation. The King's *Mercurius Aulicus* wrote, on April 11th, 'It was this day reported exceedingly confidently by some who came from London lately, how it was noised in the City that the Earl of Essex was to leave the place of General unto Mr. Hampden, as one more active and so by consequence more capable of the style of Excellency.' Hampden himself put a summary end

to the agitation by a yet more scrupulous observance of the General's authority. The personal relations between the two men seems not to have been affected by difference on military policy. In a will drawn by Essex in 1642, John Hampden is named as one of the executors.

Rupert, emboldened by uninterrupted success, became a daily and nightly terror to the inhabitants of the Buckinghamshire midlands. In his missions of destruction he now had the expert guidance of Urry, who under Hampden's instruction had become a master of local topography. On a June day in 1643, Essex made an abortive attack upon a Royalist outpost at Islip in Oxfordshire. On the 17th, Rupert left Oxford with a body of two thousand men in pursuit of the troops that had retreated from this attempt. He came up with them at Chinnor before the dawn of June 18th had broken, and there destroyed them. At sunrise another Puritan force whose strength he could not determine appeared on a neighbouring hillside, and he began to fall back on Oxford, sending his infantry before him.

The new arrivals were a troop of horse under the command of Hampden, who overnight had been quartered at Watlington with his regiment. News having reached him of the action at Chinnor, he sent an urgent message to Essex, who was at Thame, imploring him to hold the passage at Chislehampton Bridge, which was Rupert's only line of retreat. He thereupon announced his intention of putting himself at the head of any horsemen in the town who would volunteer for the service, and of setting out to engage the man who in a few months had become an

almost legendary menace to the countryside. A troop of Captain Sheffield's horse responding to his call, Hampden mounted and led them out of Watlington. They were almost immediately in touch with Rupert's rearguard, but the Prince with his cavalry advanced beyond Hampden's pursuit until he overtook his own infantry at Chalgrove Field.

## IV

His friends attempted to dissuade Hampden from this enterprise, on the ground that action with cavalry was not his business. But these niceties meant nothing to Hampden in a crisis, and the possibility of destroying Rupert was not to be neglected. He might be assured that Captain Sheffield was quite capable of handling the affair himself. Doubtless he was, but no risks were to be taken, and Hampden knew that nobody so well as he could negotiate the countryside in which they were. So hurriedly did he leave Robert Parslow's inn, 'The Hare and Hounds,' at Watlington in which he was quartered, that he made no provision in the event of his not returning, for the disposal of a treasure chest that he had with him. It was never claimed, and Parslow in his will devoted the money to a benefaction which is still disbursed in Watlington. Annually on the 19th of November, the anniversary of Parslow's funeral, a bell tolls throughout the day, a memorial sermon is preached, and ten poor parishioners are provided with new coats or gowns. From investigations made on the spot it appears probable that 'The Hare and Hounds' in Hampden's



time was the sign of an inn that then stood on the present site of the old Salvation Army Barracks.

Having reached Chalgrove Field, Rupert realised that with his infantry he could no longer outpace his pursuers, and prepared for action. In making his disposition he was ably assisted by the abominable Urry, of whom Clarendon tries in vain to present a tolerable picture.

‘ He had owned and published his discontents long before, and demanded redress and justice in some particulars from the Parliament, in which the Earl of Essex thought he had reason, and wished he might receive satisfaction. But the man was in his nature proud and imperious, and had raised many enemies, and was besides of license, and committed many disorders of that kind ; and had little other virtue than being a very good officer in the field, and regular and vigilant in marching and in his quarters, which the Parliament thought other men would attain to who had fewer vices, and therefore granted nothing that he desired.’

It will be seen from the contemporary account printed in the Appendix to this volume, that there was a report in London after the action that Urry had been killed or taken. Unhappily this was not so. He received the honour of knighthood from the King at Oxford as a reward for his services on this occasion but, after a career of what must be unexampled shamelessness, during which he thrice deserted from one party to another, he was beheaded at Edinburgh in 1650. On June 18th, 1642, however, he was in high spirits, confident that his old Puritan friends

were in a trap from which the indolence of Essex at Thame certainly would not release them.

Rupert's lines were drawn up among the standing crops. Like Edgehill, Chalgrove was fought on a Sunday. It was 8 o'clock in the morning, with the sun shining in a cloudless sky, when a body of dragoons under Colonel Gunter, who had been in communication with Hampden at Watlington, entered the field. Instead of waiting for support from Hampden and the reinforcements which were expected from Thame, Gunter rashly engaged the Prince with an inferior force, and was killed in the first charge. His dragoons in retreat were rallied by Hampden and Sheffield, who now joined the action from the Watlington road. Clarendon says that at Chalgrove the Puritans had the advantage in numbers, but he does not substantiate his claim by figures, and in any case the statement is misleading. The action was largely an affair of cavalry, but while Rupert may have been inferior to Hampden and Gunter in the number of his horse, he had the advantage of infantry support, while the Puritans had none. It was for this reason that as Hampden engaged Rupert, on the miscarriage of Gunter's attack, his chief aim was to keep the action alive until reinforcements should arrive from Thame. His personal direction of this purpose, however, was cut short as he led his troop in an attempt to repair Gunter's failure. 'He was struck in the shoulder with two carbine balls, which breaking the bone, entered his body, and his arm hung shattered and powerless by his side.' Essex, in his official dispatch to Westminster, reported: 'Colonel Hampden put himself in Captain Crosse's troop, where he

charged with much courage, and was unfortunately shot through the shoulder.' How unfortunately, Essex did not know when he wrote. Urry is said to have ridden about the field, pointing out the most distinguished of his old friends to the marksmen of his new command. In the confusion Hampden was hardly noticed as, mortally wounded, he rode away. Only one of Rupert's prisoners declared later in the day that 'he was confident Mr. Hampden was hurt, for he saw him ride off the field before the action was done, which he never used to do, and with his head hanging down, and resting his hands upon the neck of his horse.'

The action continued and Essex as usual was too late. Before he arrived, the Puritans had been routed, and Rupert was on his way to Oxford with two hundred prisoners. By noon he had entered the city in triumph, his success, says Clarendon, being very seasonable, raising the spirits of the Court, and for some time allaying 'the jealousies and animosities which too often broke out in several factions to the disquiet of the King.'\* The *Mercurius Aulicus* having on the 18th reported Rupert's success at Chinnor, wrote on Monday, the 19th, that the victory was greater than had at first been thought, the action having been renewed on the Sunday, when 'the Rebels lost divers of their prime Commanders and most able officers, Hampden himself (who did most eagerly persuade to give the onset) being so sore wounded in two places, and his body so extremely bruised, that it was verily conceived he would not live.'

\* See Appendix C for a contemporary account of the actions round Chalgrove Field.

There is a poignancy in the fact that the Green Coats were not with their beloved colonel in his last action. Our knowledge of what happened to Hampden as he rode away from Chalgrove rests largely on local tradition. Nugent, however, sifted this thoroughly more than a hundred years ago, and his narrative has all the marks of accuracy. The stricken man is said to have been seen making for the house at Pyrton from which he had married his first wife. He was turned from this direction, however, by the sight of Rupert's cavalry in the distance, and took to the fields across Haseley towards Thame, moving in his extremity by lanes and pastures that he had known since childhood. Having to take by-ways and secluded tracks for safety, he reached the Thame brook at a point where there was no bridge. He paused as though in doubt what to do, and then 'he suddenly summoned his strength, clapped spurs and cleared the leap.' In great pain and almost fainting he reached Thame, and was conducted to a house traditionally identified with what until recent years was the 'Greyhound Inn,' where, his wounds being dressed, 'the surgeon would, for a while, have given him hopes of life.' It will be seen from the account printed in the Appendix that it was by some reported at the time that Hampden's injuries were not mortal. 'That noble and valiant gentleman, received a shot with a bullet behind in the shoulder, which stuck between the bone and the flesh, but is since drawn forth, and himself very cheerful and hearty, and is by God's mercy more likely to be a badge of honour than any danger to life.'

The scene of this last episode in Hampden's life

is to-day, after three hundred years, curiously unchanged. The field of Chalgrove, with the village lying a mile to the south, is perhaps a little more cultivated than it was when the corn was surrounded by scrub. But on a sunny day the peace is as unbroken in these convulsive times as it was when the milkmaids were startled on that June morning by the glint of Rupert's spears. Within living memory a yeoman family in Chalgrove was going daily on the occupations that had been followed by forebears who had stood agape at the strange violence that was invading their pastoral industry. The Pyrton Manor towards which Hampden's instinct led him in his extremity has been a little refashioned. The old mullions have gone : and the church, within a stone's throw, has been restored by Victorian ineptitude. But the long unbroken perspectives and the quiet security of the place remain. The fishponds are still there, with drifting weeds and lazy carp. The path across the meadows to Great Haseley could still be recognised by Hampden, and the brook that caused him so fatal an effort is yet a trap to many an experienced rider with the South Oxfordshires. There is hardly a landscape in England that has been less affected by the course of centuries.

Hampden himself, however, knew better than the optimistic surgeons. For six days he endured the agony caused by mortification of his wounds. During his conscious hours he talked repeatedly of his country's misery, of the infirmity that was betraying the great Puritan cause, of the necessity for greater faith and bolder enterprise. He sent messages to Parliament, imploring them to strike in such way as should put

a final end to this tragic business, and in the last moments of his life he concealed nothing of his misgivings about Essex. On the morning of the 24th of June, 1643, it was clear that he could not live through the day. He was attended by the surgeons and by his friends, Dr. Giles, the rector of Chinnor, and William Spurstowe, chaplain of his Green Coats. Declaring that he had no mind for bishops, he nevertheless took the last sacrament, as 'conformable to God's word, as in Holy Scripture revealed.' He prayed for mercy on his transgressions, and for the land that he had loved with so pure a patriotism. 'O Lord, save my bleeding country, have these realms in thy special keeping.' Beseeching that the King might see his error, he then commended his soul to Christ and, striving again to plead for England, he died.

The report of Hampden's dying words was taken by Nugent from what professed to be a contemporary narrative, by one Edward Clough contributed from family papers by a correspondent in *The Gentleman's Magazine* in 1815. C. H. Firth, in letters to *The Academy* dated November 2nd and 9th (not the 29th, as stated by Gardiner), 1889, gives his reasons for suspecting the authenticity of this document. On the whole, they are convincing, but it does not necessarily follow that it was not based on authentic material. It is true, as Firth maintains, that the diction and orthography of the narrative bear signs of a source later than the seventeenth century, and at points there are suggestive resemblances to Clarendon's published account of Hampden. Nevertheless, I see no reason for dismissing 'Edward Clough' out



THE ARCHED WINDOW OF THE  
ROOM IN WHICH HAMPDEN DIED.  
Premises formerly the Greyhound  
Inn, Thame.



THE HAMPDEN MONUMENT AT CHALGROVE  
FIELD.

of hand as an impudent forger and no more. The narrative, although it was doubtless put on paper at some later date, may still have been arranged from contemporary notes in the writer's family. Indeed, its tone by no means supports the theory of mere invention. Historical evidence may be too easily accepted; also it may be too easily, and no less dangerously, rejected.

That 'Edward Clough' was right at least in the spirit of his narrative is confirmed by other testimony. With Hampden at Chalgrove Field was his friend, Arthur Goodwin of the Buckinghamshire Horse. There is even an unsupported tradition that Goodwin conducted the wounded man to Thame. That he was with him during his last hours is shown by a letter that he wrote to his daughter, Lady Wharton :

' Dear Jenny,

' I am now here at Hampden in doing the last duty for the deceased owner of it, of whom every honest man hath a share in the loss, and therefore will likewise in the sorrow. In the loss of such a friend to my own particular, I have no cause of discontent, but rather to bless God that he hath not according to my deserts bereft me of you and all the comforts dearest to me. All his thoughts and endeavours of his life was zealously in this cause of God's, which he continued in all his sickness, even to his death. For all I can hear the last words he spake was to me, though he lived six or seven hours after I came away as in a sleep. Truly, Jenny . . . he was a gallant man, an honest man, an able man, and take all, I know not to any man living second.



God now in mercy hath rewarded him. . . . I have writ to London for a black suit, I pray let me beg of you a broad black Ribbon to hang about my Standard. . . . I would we all lay it to heart, that God takes away the best amongst us. I pray the Lord to bless you. Your ever, dear Jenny, most affectionate father,

A<sup>n</sup>. GOODWIN.'

' Hampden,

' *June 26th, 1643.*'

Goodwin himself did not long survive Hampden, his will being proved in November, 1644. In it, symptomatic of the distracted times, was discovered an unrevoked bequest of twenty pounds in token of affection to his dead friend.

Philip Warwick, who was intimately in the King's counsels, says that Charles wished to send his own surgeon to Hampden's aid while he lay dying at Thame. Warwick's description of Hampden and his death, though inaccurate in its details of Chalgrove, is valuable as denoting the view taken of the fallen leader in responsible Royalist circles. The curious little note on Hampden's personal appearance means, in the language of the time, no more than that his complexion had its humours. 'A sickness at this time had seized upon the Earl of Essex's army ; so that considerable man Colonel Hampden, with Colonel Sheffield, was about Chinner, levying recruits for that army in Oxfordshire towards Thame. Prince Rupert with a strong party drawn out of Oxford, being advertised of it by Colonel Hurry, a Scot, defeated them there in Chalgrove Field. . . .

Hampden himself was retreated with a small party into a little field very near the place of engagement : a small party of the Prince's perceiving that little body so at a distance, briskly charged them, having not the least knowledge that Mr. Hampden was among them. Here he received a hurt in the shoulder, whereof in three or four days after he died ; for his blood in its temper was acrimonious, as the scurfe commonly on his face showed.

‘ He was certainly a person of the greatest abilities of any of that party. He had a great knowledge both in Scholarship and in the Law. He was of a concise and significant language, and the mildest, yet subtlest speaker of any man in the house ; and has a dexterity when a question was going to be put, which agreed not with his sense, to draw it over to it, by adding some equivocal or sly word. . . . He was a man of great and plentiful estate, and of great interest in his country and of a regular life ; and though he took upon him but the title of a Colonel (for he had greater interest to raise men, than aptitude to range or fight them) yet he thus died in a martial engagement. The news whereof, he being so eminent a man, soon came to Oxford by a tenant of Dr. Giles, who was Parson of Chinner, not far from the place where the engagement was ; who accidentally meeting me, first told it unto me, and I brought him unto the King. The Doctor was a near neighbour and friend of Mr. Hampden's, and being an opulent man, he had built himself a very good Parsonage-house, in the contrivance of which structure Mr. Hampden had used his skill. The King required the Doctor, as from himself, to send

to see him, for I found the King would have sent him over any surgeon of his, if any had been wanting ; for he looked upon his interest, if he could gain his affection, as a powerful means of begetting a right understanding betwixt him and his two Houses. I remember how the Doctor regretted the King's command ; for, says he, " I have seemed unlucky to him in several conjunctions of time, when I made addresses to him in my own behalf : for he having been formerly so kindly my friend, before I came to Oxford, we the Prebendaries of Windsor being all turned out of our houses, in the carrying off of my goods my wagons were robbed and plundered, though warranted by passport, and I addressing to him for release, my messenger came in that very instant in which the news of his eldest son's death came to him ; and some good time after, falling into a like calamity, though I failed of the fruit of his intended release the first time, yet I hoped to have found it the second ; but my messenger unfortunately met then with another, that brought the news of his beloved daughter, Mrs. Knightley's death ; so I seemed to scritch-owl him." However, the Doctor sent, and when he heard of a message from him, this poor gentleman, though he was in a high fever and not very sensible, was much amaied [*sic*] at it. These little stories I put down, because the discovery of great men's natures are often lively expositions of their great counsels : history being but a reduction of morals into example. It was usually said that he had more ambition to be the Prince's Governor than any greater place ; for aiming at the alteration of some parts of the Government he knew of how great

a consequence it would be that a young Prince should have principles suitable to what should be established as laws.'

There is no reason to question Warwick's veracity. Hampden a few months before had said, when asked what he would have the King do, that he would have him place himself and his family unreservedly in the hands of Parliament ; but the King knew, as everyone in England knew, that no Puritan leader desired a firm and lasting reconstitution of the monarchy more seriously than Hampden. Charles was right in his belief that in Hampden was a potential friend who, perhaps more than any other, was worth saving. When the great patriot on his death-bed prayed that the King might see the error of his ways, he was using no mere words of pious formality. That the King might see the error of his ways was the dearest hope of his life, and it was his dearest hope in death. Even then he fondly believed that God who could do all things might somehow bring light to that clouded and intolerant spirit. Hampden died refusing to realise that this could never be. With him passed away the last great moderating influence of the Puritan party, and the future was with Cromwell.

The hack Royalist writers, who were neither better nor worse than their Puritan rivals, used Hampden's death in their kind as an occasion to traduce his character. But the attacks gave no pleasure to the King, nor to any responsible person in his party. Even the *Mercurius Aulicus*, recording his death, referring to him now not merely as one but as chief of the Five Members, did not go beyond reminding

its readers of the moral that it had drawn in April from the fallen rebel's private misfortunes. Dugdale, indeed, in recording Hampden's death could only reflect upon it that it took place on 'the very field wherein he [Hampden] first put in execution the Parliament's ordinance for the militia of that county, as a precedent for the rest of England;' Clarendon's opinion of Hampden's character has been seen; of his death he could only record that what would have been a considerable recompense for defeat was a glorious crown of victory. Among the Puritans themselves there was no doubt as to the gravity of the loss that had befallen them. Whitelock, in words that have been already given, bore the testimony of one who had seen Hampden in action, in debate, and in administration, and had never found him wanting. To Ludlow he was 'that most eminent patriot.' Richard Baxter, who had seen much of the Civil War as a Puritan chaplain in the field, wrote in his *Saint's Everlasting Rest*: 'Mr. Hampden was one that friends and enemies acknowledged to be most eminent for prudence, piety, and peaccable counsels, having the most universal praise of any gentleman that I remember of that age.' Later writers, with all the evidence before them, have forgotten their differences in common homage to this great man. Chalgrove Field, says Hume, 'was rendered memorable only by the death of the famous Hampden'; and then, echoing Clarendon, 'nor could his whole party, had their army met with a total overthrow have been struck with greater consternation.' Macaulay, in his summary of Hampden's character, speaks of 'The sobriety, the self-command, the perfect soundness of

judgment, the perfect rectitude of intention, to which the history of revolution furnishes no parallel, or furnishes a parallel in Washington alone.' Yet more recent historians agree that Hampden's death was an irreparable loss not only to his party, but also to a nation in its agony. At the time of his death there can be no doubt that Hampden had finally persuaded himself that steps to remove Essex must be taken without further delay, and at the moment no one else was left by whom this could be effected. Had he lived, it is almost certain that the situation would have escaped the long indecisive period through Newbury to Marston Moor. Action such as Hampden, and he alone, might have taken towards the close of the summer campaign in 1643, might well have spared the country years of bitterness. Speculation is dangerous, but it indicates what has been in the minds of men who have seen in Hampden's death a national calamity.

The news, when it reached London, even in days when disaster was a byword, fell grievously on all opinions alike. Nothing had so quickened the public sense of the waste and futility of war as the death of this brave and gentle man. *The Weekly Intelligencer* wrote :

'The loss of Colonel Hampden goeth near the heart of every man that loves the good of his king and country, and makes some conceive little content to be at the army now that he is gone . . . The memory of this deceased colonel is such that in no age to come but it will more and more be had in honour and esteem ; a man so religious, and of that prudence,

judgment, temper, valour, and integrity, that he hath left few his like behind him.'

On June 25th Hampden's body was taken from Thame for burial in the parish church on his own estate. No trace of the grave now remains. Such troops in the neighbourhood as could be spared from duty followed in procession. Among them was a detachment of the Buckingham Green Coats. As they marched barcheaded along the road with arms reversed and drums muffled, they sang the ninetyeth Psalm : ' Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations. . . . Return, O Lord, how long ? and let it repent thee concerning thy servants ' ; and, having taken their last farewell of the man who had been an inspiration to their lives, they filed out of the churchyard singing the forty-third :

' Judge me, O God, and plead my cause against an ungodly nation : O deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man. . . .

' Why art thou cast down, O my soul ? and why art thou disquieted within me ? hope in God : for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.'

## APPENDIX A

*Articles of impeachment against the Five Members. A contemporary broadsheet.*

By the King's Majesty Were accused with seven Articles of High Treason, these worthy Members in the House of Commons in Parliament, Monday Jan. 3, 1641. Viz. The Lord Kimbolton. John Hampden Esquire. Mr. John Pym Esquire. Sir Arthur Haslerig. Kt. Denzil Hollis Esquire. William Strowd Esquire. London, Printed for E.C. and J.W. 1641.

Articles of High Treason, and other misdemeanours, against the Lord Kimbolton, Mr. Pym, John Hambden, Denzill Hollis, Sir Arthur Haslerig, and William Strowd, being all Members of the House of Commons.

### I

That they have traiterously endeavoured to subvert the Fundamentall laws and Government of this Kingdome, and deprive the King of his Legal power, & to place on subjects an Arbitrary and tyrannicall power.

### II

That they have endeavoured by many foule aspersions upon his Majesty and his Government, to alienate the affections of his people, and to make his Majesty odious to them.



## III

That they have endeavoured to draw his Majesties late army to disobedience to his Majesties command, and to side with them in their traiterous designs.

## IV

That they have Trayterously invited, & encouraged a forraign power to invade his Majesties Kingdome of England. [See below.]

## V

That they have traiterously endeavoured to Subvert the very Rights and Beings of Parliaments.

## VI

That for the Compleating of their Trayterous designs, they have endeavoured as far as in them lay by force, and Terror, to compell the Parliament to joyne with them in their Trayterous Designes, and to that end, have actually raysed, and countenanced tumults against the King and Parliament.

## VII

That they have Trayterously conspired to Leavy, and actually have Leavied war against the King.

The Herald at Armes that brought this charge from his Majesty, for the accusation of these members of the House of Commons, of High Treasons, did afterwards goe unto their lodgings and chambers, and broke open their studies, taking away all writings and notes he found there.

After this their accusation of High Treason, the rest of the members of the House of Commons did Bayle them, preferring to be bound for them, body for body, whereupon they were not committed, but onely sequestered from the house, Monday Jan. 3. 1641.

The next day being Tuesday, many of the Citizens of London, hearing this newes did shut up their shops, fearing some Insurrections would ensue upon this occasion of disaster in the Parliament house.

Propositions from the Scottish Commissioners, to the Commons of England.

That wee would rise and transport at our owne charges 10000 men out of Scotland into Ireland, to manifest our brotherly affection to the Crown of England.

2. Wee desire to have 30000 pounds advanced for our brotherly assistance, because we are so much behind hand with our Souldiers of their old pay, that they will not bee willing to enter into any new employment, before they be satisfied they arreares.

3. Wee desire that for those Armes and Ammunition which we should send with our 10000 men into Ireland we might have the same number or Armes and quantity of Ammunition sent from England thither, there to lye deposited till our owne armes shall be returned, and we will put in security to returne your armes safe again into England, deducting onely from them so many as shall be lost in this imployment.

4. That they would take order for a certaine number of shipping which might bee ready between the Irish and Scottish Coast, to secure the passing

of men thither, and that they may lye there constantly from time to time, to bring in Victuals, ammunition or supply to our men whensoever they should require it, as also to secure their retreat, if need should be.

5. That to every thousand Foot you would allow one Hundred Horse and that those horse should from time to time receive their Commands from our Generall.

6. That whereas you have left the pay wholly to us both of Commanders and Souldiers, wee have not done any thing therein but doe referre it wholly to your propositions, hoping you will not give our men lesse then your owne, and more we would not have, but will be contented with such a proportion as you would to your owne.

On Tuesday, the 4, of January, 1641. The Kings Majestic went to Westminster, from his Pallace at White Hall, with many Attendants and when his Majestic came to Westminster Hall, the way was commanded to be cleared, which was done accordingly: And at the foote of the staires going up to the House of Commons the Marques Hambleton met his Majesty and attended him to the House.

When his Majesty was come into the house Mr. Speaker rose out of his Chaire, and his Majesty sat their himselfe, and before them spake to this effect, demanding where Mr. Pym and some others were, and enquiring for them, and not finding them there, expressed himselfe to be displeased that they were not there, desiring that they may presently be Apprehended.

## APPENDIX B.

### *Report of supernatural events at Edgehill.*

A Great Wonder in Heaven, shewing the late Apparitions and Prodigious Noyses of War and Battels, seen on Edge-Hill, neere Keinton in Northamptonshire.—Certified under the Hands of William Wood, Esquire, and Justice for the Peace in the said Countie, Samuel Marshall, Preacher of Gods Word in Keinton, and other Persons of Qualitie.—London: Printed for Thomas Jackson, Jan. 23, Anno Dom. 1642.

That there hath beene, and ever will be, Laruæ, Spectra, and such like apparitions, namely, Ghosts and Goblins, hath beene the opinion of all the famousest Divines of the Primitive Church, and is, (though oppugned by some,) the received Doctrine of divers learned men at this day; their opinion being, indeed, ratified and confirmed by divers Texts of Scripture, as the Divells possessing the Swine, and the men possessed with Divells, in the Acts of the Apostles, that came out of them, and beat the Exorcists, by which it is evidently confirmed that those legions of erring angels that fell with their great Master Lucifer, are not all confined to the locall Hell, but live scattered, here and there, dispersed in the empty regions of the ayre, as thicke as motes in the Sunne; and those are the things which our too superstitious ancestors called Elves, and Goblins, Furies, and the like, such as were those who appeared to Macbeth, the after King of Scotland, and foretold him of his

fortunes both in life and death. It is evident, besides, that the Divell can condense the ayre into any shape he pleaseth, as hee is a subtill spirit, thin and open, and rancke himselfe into any forme or likenesse, as Saint Augustin, Prudentius, Hieronimus, Cyril, Saint Basil the Great, and none better then our late Sovereigne King James, of ever-living memory, in his Treatise de Demonologia, hath sufficiently proved. But, to omit circumstance and preamble ; no man that thinkes hee hath a soule, but will verily and confidently believe that there are divells ; and so, consequently, such divells as appeare either in premonstrance of Gods Judgements, or as fatall Embassadours to declare the message of mortality and destruction to offending nations, and hath, in Germany and other places, afflicted afterwards with the horror of a civill and forraigne warres, notoriously manifested.

But to our purpose. Edge-Hill, in the very confines of Warwickshire, neere unto Keynton in Northamptonshire, a place, as appeares by the sequel, destined for civill warres and battells ; as where King John fought a battell with his Barons, and where, in defence of the Kingdomes lawes and libertie, was fought a bloody conflict betweene his Majesties and the Parliaments forces ; at this Edge-Hill, in the very place where the battell was stricken, have since, and doth appeare, strange and portentuous Apparitions of two jarring and contrary Armies, as I shall in order deliver, it being certified by the men of most credit in those parts, as William Wood, Esquire, Samuel Marshall, Minister, and others, on Saturday, which was in Christmas time, as if the Saviour of the world,

who died to redeem mankind, had been angry that so much Christian blood was there spilt, and so had permitted these infernall Armies to appeare where the corporeall Armies had shed so much blood ; between twelve and one of the clock in the morning was heard by some Shepherds, and other countrey-men, and travellers, first the sound of drummes afar off, and the noyse of souldiers, as it were, giving out their last groanes ; at which they were much amazed, and amazed stood still, till it seemed, by the neerenesse of the noyse, to approach them ; at which too much affrighted, they sought to withdraw as fast as possibly they could ; but then, on the sudden, whilst they were in these cogitations, appeared in the ayre the same incorporeall souldiers that made those clamours, and immediately, with Ensignes display'd, Drummes beating, Musquets going off, Cannons discharged, Horses neyghing, which also to these men were visible, the alarum or entrance to this game of death was stricke up, one Army, which gave the first charge, having the Kings colours, and the other the Parliaments, in their head or front of the battells, and so pell mell to it they went ; the battell that appeared to the Kings forces seeming at first to have the best, but afterwards to be put into apparent rout ; but till two or three in the morning in equall scale continued this dreadful fight, the clattering of Armes, noyse of Cannons, cries of souldiers, so amazing and terrifying the poore men, that they could not believe they were mortall, or give credit to the eares and eyes ; runne away they durst not, for feare of being made a prey to these infernall souldiers, and so they, with much feare and affright, stayed to behold the successe

of the businesse, which at last suited to this effect : after some three houres fight, that Army which carryed the Kings colours withdrew, or rather appeared to flie : the other remaining, as it were, masters of the field, stayed a good space triumphing, and expressing all the signes of joy and conquest, and then, with all their Drummes, Trumpets, Ordnance, and Souldiers, vanished ; the poore men glad they were gone, that had so long staid them there against their wils, made with all haste to Keinton, and there knocking up Mr. Wood, a Justice of Peace, who called up his neighbour, Mr. Marshall, the Minister, they gave them an account of the whole passage, and averred it upon their oaths to be true. At which affirmation of theirs, being much amazed, they should hardly have given credit to it, but would have conjectured the men to have been either mad or drunk, had they not knowne some of them to have been of approved integritie : and so, suspending their judgements till the next night about the same houre, they, with the same men, and all the substantiall Inhabitants of that and the neighbouring parishes, drew thither ; where, about halfe an hourc after their arrivall, on Sunday, being Christmas night, appeared in the same tumultuous warlike manner, the same two adverse Armies, fighting with as much spite and spleen as formerly ; and so departed ; the Gentlemen and all the spectatours, much terrified with these visions of horror, withdrew themselves to their houses, beseeching God to defend them from those hellish and prodigious enemies. The next night they appeared not, nor all that week, so that the dwellers thereabout were in good hope they had for ever

departed ; but on the ensuing Saturday night, in the same place, and at the same houre, they were again seene with far greater tumult, fighting in the manner afore-mentioned for foure houres, or verie neere, and then vanished, appearing againe on Sunday night, and performing the same actions of hostilitie and bloudshed ; so that both Mr. Wood and others, whose faith, it should seeme, was not strong enough to carrie them out against these delusions, forsook their habitations thereabout, and retired themselves to other more secure dwellings ; but Mr. Marshall stayed, and some other ; and so successively the next Saturday and Sunday the same tumults and prodigious sights and actions were put in the state and condition they were formerly. The rumour whereof comming to his Majestie at Oxford, he immediately dispatched thither Colonell Lewis Kirke, Captaine Dudley, Captaine Wainman, and three other Gentlemen of credit, to take the full view and notice of the said businesse, who, first hearing the true attestation and relation of Mr. Marshall and others, staid there till Saturday night following, wherein they heard and saw the fore-mentioned prodigies, and so on Sunday, distinctly knowing divers of the apparitions or incorporeall substances by their faces, as that of Sir Edmund Varney, and others that were slaine ; of which upon oath they made testimony to his Majestie. What this does portent God only knoweth, and time perhaps will discover ; but doubtlesly it is a signe of his wrath against this Land, for these civill wars, which He in his good time finish, and send a sudden peace between his Majestie and Parliament.

FINIS.



## APPENDIX C

### *Contemporary account of Chalgrove Field.*

A True Relation of a Great Fight Between the Kings Forces and the Parliaments, at Chinner neer Tame on Saturday last. With the manner how the Kings Forces made the assault, and by what meanes they were forced to retreat. Also in what manner Colonell Hampden is wounded, with the names of the chiefe Commanders that were killed and taken prisoners on both sides : As also the firing and burning of the Towne of Chinner, by the Kings Forces, and many other remarkable passages concerning the said fight. London printed by B.A. for Robert Wood, and John Grenesmith.

A True Relation of a great fight between the Kings Forces and the Parliaments.

Upon Monday last it was informed by divers letters, and several persons that came from the Army, to this effect, viz. That on Saturday night last, three or foure troops of the Kings forces having wheeled about from Abingdon to Wallingford, and from thence towards Stoken church, under the Hills neere unto Tetsworth, they came unto a towne three miles from Tame, called Chinner, (at which place the Lord Generall with his maine Forces, consisting as it is credibly informed of very neer thirty thousand able fighting men) were quartered, it being upon the edge

of Buckinghamshire, at which place were quartered about four hundred of the Parliaments Forces, the greatest part whereof were forces that lately came to assist his Excellencie in the Parliaments service, which came out of Bedfordshire and Essex, and missing of the Parliament Scouts, they came to the said towne, and gave a sudden assault against the Parliaments Forces there, and cut of some of their Centinels, and entred the towne, and according to their barbarous and destructive manner, fired the same in divers places : But before I proceed in the further relation of this businesse, I may not forget the valour and courage of the Parliaments forces, which were in this towne : for they charged the enemy with as much courage and resolution, as could bee expected or performed by men, being unexpectedly assaulted, and continued fight with them many houres. And upon this assault of the enemy, an alarm was given to the Lord Generals quarters at Tame ; upon which divers troops of horse were designed to sally forth upon this expedition : And amongst those Colonels and Commanders that were at an instant willing to hazard their lives upon this designe, Colonell Hampden (who is a Gentleman that hath never been wanting to adventure his life and fortunes for the good and welfare of his King and Countrey, may not be forgotten), who finding of a good troop of Horse (whose Captain was at that time willing) desired to know whether they would be commanded by him upon this designe : whereupon the officers and common souldiers freely and unanimously consented, and proffered to adventure their lives with this noble Gentleman, and shewed much cheerfulness that they could have the

honour to be led by so noble a Captaine. And so the said Colonell Hampden, and some other Colonels and Captains came with a considerable party of horse with all expedition to assist the rest of their forces, which as aforesaid, were quartered at Chinner. And as soone as the Cavaleers perceived that some of the Lord Generals Forces were come in from Tame, they presently fled from Chinner backe againe towards Tetworth, and were then pursued by Colonell Hampden, and the rest of the Lord Generals forces that came upon this designe about two miles : in which pursuit there were many of the Kings Forces killed and taken prisoners, in which retreat this is observable, that the Cavaliers (as it appeared afterward) had plotted in a perfidious manner, to have intrapped the Parliaments Forces, and to have killed or taken them all prisoners, but it pleased God to prevent their plot : for in the way Prince Rupert with about 1000 Horse lay in ambush ready to fall upon the Parliaments forces, as they were in pursuit of the first victory, who appeared and gave a hot charge upon the Parliaments forces ; and although the Earle of Essex forces were scarce ten for one, that were at this time in the battell, yet they gave them a brave volly of shot, and slew many of the enemies forces as well at this place which was neer Tetsworth, as at Chinner, and for some time it being Sunday morning, held them fight without the losse of many men. But at last the enemy having intelligence that some Regiments of foot were coming from Tame of the Lord Generals forces, they retreated towards Abington, and durst not fight till they came in : for the foot forces are a great amazement unto them.

Having thus farre in a generall manner declared the truth of this business, it rests in the next place that I enter some perticulers concerning the same for the better satisfaction of the Kingdome whose expectation thirsteth after the same, I dare not to delude with false and fabulous matter and therefore I shall (being the first relater hereof) ommit uncertaine reports, than committ that to writing which hereafter may be questionable, and therefore I shall be more spareing therein and write onely those things which are authenticke, which that I may doe, first it is certain that Colonell Hampden that noble and valiant Gentleman, received a shot with a Bullet behind in the shoulder, which stuck between the bone and the flesh, but is since drawne forth, and himselfe very cheerfull and hearty, and it (through Gods mercy) more likely to be a badge of honour, than any danger of life.

Serjant Major Gunter a Gent. of the Parliaments side was slaine, and Cap. Buller (as it is thought) taken prisoner, some other prisoners were taken on the Parliaments side, but in regard the perticulers of the fight were not knowne when the intelligence came from the Army, I shall ommit to perticulerize any more of them.

On the Enemies side was slaine Cap. Legge (who was once taken prisoner by the Parliament forces and made an escape) and it is said Col. Hurrey which was heretofore imployed in the Parliaments service and was the last weeke in London, is either killed or taken Prisoner, the L. Thomas Howard is also taken prisoner by the Parliament forces, with divers other Gent, of quallity, besides Common Souldiers.

The certaine Number that were slayne on either side I shall not at this time relate for that it was not knowne in the Army when the Post that brought this tydings came from thence, but it is reported that there was an equall losse on both sides there being about 400 slayne on both sides.

A great part of the Town of Chinner was burnt by the Kings forces by which doings compared with what hath beene certified out of other parts, we may see that killing, burning and destroying of all that is deare to us, is the Religious Lawes and property of the Subject they Seeke for.

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